

T H E

2

# Suspicious Husband.

A

C O M E D Y.

As it is Acted at the

T H E A T R E S - R O Y A L

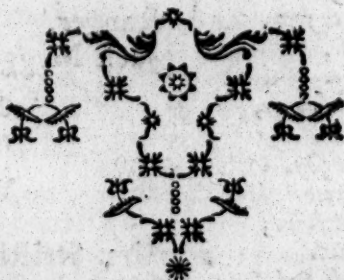
I N

Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

---

By Dr. H O A D L Y. *1747*

---



---

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. WENMAN, No 144, FLEET-STREET; and Sold by all  
other Booksellers in Town and Country

M DCC LXXVII.



# PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

**W**HILE other culprits brave it to the last,  
Nor beg for mercy till the judgment's past;  
Poets alone, as conscious of their crimes,  
Open their trials with imploring rhymes.  
Thus cram'd with flattery and low submission,  
Each trite dull Prologue is the bard's petition.  
A stale device to calm the critic's fury,  
And bribe at once the judges and the jury.  
But what avail such poor repeated arts?  
The twink'ring scribbler ne'er can touch your hearts:  
Nor ought an ill-tim'd pity to take place—  
Fast as they rise destroy th' increasing race:  
The vermin else will run the nation o'er—  
By saving one, you breed a million more.  
Tho' disappointed authors rail and rage  
At fancy'd parties, and a senseless age,  
Yet still has justice triumph'd on the stage.  
Thus speaks, and thinks, the author of to-day;  
And saying this, has little more to say.  
He asks no friend his partial zeal to shew,  
Nor fears the groundless censures of a foe:  
He knows no friendship can protect the fool,  
Nor will an audience be a party's tool.  
'Tis inconsistent with a free-born spirit,  
To side with folly, or to injure merit.  
By your decision he must fall or stand,  
Nor, tho' he feels the lash, will blame the hand.

# EPILOGUE.

By Mr. GARRICK.

**T**HO' the young smarts, I see, begin to sneer,  
And the old sinners cast a wicked leer:  
Be not alarm'd, ye fair—You've nought to fear.  
No wanton hint, no loose ambiguous sense,  
Shall flatter vicious taste at your expence.  
Leaving, for once, these shameless arts in vogue,  
We give a Fable for the Epilogue.  
An Ass there was, our author bade me say,  
Who needs must write—he did—and wrote a play.  
The parts were cast to various beasts and fowl;  
Their stage a barn—the manager an owl.  
The house was cram'd at six, with friends and foes;  
Rakes, wits, and critics, citizens, and beaux.  
These characters appear'd in different shapes,  
Of tigers, foxes, horses, bulls, and apes;  
With others too, of lower rank and station:—  
A perfect abstract of the brute creation.

Each, as he felt, mark'd out the author's faults,  
And thus the connoisseurs express'd their thoughts.  
The critic-curs first snarl'd—the rules are broke,  
Time, place, and action, sacrific'd to joke.  
The goats cry'd out, 'Twas, formal, dull, and chaste—  
Not writ for beasts of gallantry and taste.  
The horned-cattle were in pitious taking,  
At fornication, rapes, and cuckold-making.  
The tigers swore, He wanted fire and passion;  
The apes condemn'd—because it was the fashion.  
The generous steeds allow'd him proper merit;  
Here mark'd his faults, and there approv'd his spirit.  
While brother-bards bray'd forth with usual spleen.  
And, as they heard, exploded every scene.  
When Reynard's thoughts were ask'd, the struggling  
sage,  
Fam'd for hypocrisy, and worn with age,  
Condemn'd the shameless licence of the stage.  
At which the monkey skipp'd from box to box,  
And whisper'd round the judgment of the fox.  
Abus'd the moderns; talk'd of Rome and Greece;  
Bilk'd every box-keeper; and damn'd the piece.

Now ev'ry fable has a moral to it—  
Be churchman, statesman, any thing—but poet.  
In law, or physick, quack in what you will;  
Cant and grimace conceal the want of skill,  
Secure in these, his gravity may pass—  
But here no artifice can hide the ass.

# Dramatis Personæ.

## MEN.

Mr. Strickland.	Buckle.
Frankly.	Tester.
Bellamy.	Servant to Ranger.
Ranger.	Simon.
Jack Meggot.	

Chairmen, Footmen, &c.

## WOMEN.

Mrs. Strickland.	Landlady.
Clarinda.	Milliner.
Jacintha.	Maid.
Lucetta.	

SCENE, LONDON.



# T H E Suspicious Husband.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Ranger's Chambers in the Temple.*

*Knocking is heard at the door for some time; when Ranger enters, having let himself in.*

**R**ANGER more I am got safe to the Temple—Let me reflect a little—I have set up all night; I have my head full of bad wine, and the noise of cards, dice, and the damn'd tingling of tavern bells; my spirits jaded, and my eyes sunk in my head: and all this for the conversation of a company of fellows I despise. Their wit lies only in obscenity, there is no wit in noise, and their delight in a box and dice. Honest Ranger, take my word for it, thou art a naughty filthy fellow.

*Enter Servant, with a wig dressed.*

Where have you been, rascal? If I had not had the key in my pocket, I must have waited at the door in my dainty dress.

**Serv.** I was only below combing out your honour's wig.

**Rang.** Well, give me my cap.—*[Pulling off his wig.]* Why, how like a raking dog do you look, compar'd to that spruce, sober gentleman!—Go, you battered devil, and be made fit to be seen.

*[Throwing his wig to the servant.]*

**Serv.** God! my master's very merry this morning.

*[Exit.]*

**Rang.** And now for the law. *[Sits down and reads.]*

*Tell me no more, I am deceiv'd;  
That Chloe's false and common;  
By Heav'n I all along believ'd  
She was a very woman.*

*As such I lik'd, as such carest'd;  
She still was constant when possess'd;  
She could do more for no man.*

Honest Congreve was a man after my own heart.

*Servants pass over the stage.*

Have you been for the money this morning, as I order'd you?

**Serv.** No, Sir. You bade me go before you was up—I did not know your honour meant before you went to bed.

**Rang.** None of your jokes, I pray; but to business—Go to the coffee-house, and enquire if there has been any letter or message left for me.

**Serv.** I shall, Sir. *[Exit.]*

**Rang.** *[repeats]* You think she's false, I'm sure she's kind;  
I take her body, you her mind,  
Which has the better bargain?

That I had such a soft, deceitful fair, to lull my senses to their desir'd sleep—*[Knocking at the door.]*

Oh, master Simon, is it you? How long have you been in town?

**Sim.** Just come, Sir, and but for a little time neither; and yet I have as many messages as if we were to stay the whole year round. Here they are, all of them. *[Pulls out a number of cards]* And among them one for your honour.

**Rang.** *[Reads.]* Clarinda's compliments to her cousin Ranger, and should be glad to see him for ever so little a time that he can be spared from the more weighty business of the law—Ha! ha! ha! the same merry girl I ever knew her.

**Sim.** My lady is never sad, Sir. *[Knocking at the door.]*

**Rang.** Pr'ythee, Simon, open the door.

*Enter Milliner.*

Well, child—and who are you?

**Milli.** Sir, my mistress gives her service to you, and has sent you home the linen you bespoke.

**Rang.** Well, Simon, my service to your lady, and let her know I will most certainly wait upon her—I am a little busy, Simon—and so—

**Sim.** Ah, you're a wag, master Ranger, you're a wag—but mum for that.

**Rang.** I swear, my dear, you have the prettiest pair of eyes—the loveliest pouting lips!—I never saw you before.

**Milli.** No, Sir! I was always in the shop.

**Rang.** Were you so? Well, and what does your mistress say?—The devil fetch me, child, you look'd so prettily, that I could not mind one word you said.

**Milli.** Lord, Sir, you are such another gentleman! Why, she says, she is sorry she could not send them sooner. Shall I lay them down?

**Rang.** No, child. Give 'em to me.—Dear little smiling angel— *[Catches and kisses her.]*

**Milli.** I beg, Sir, you would be civil.

**Rang.** Civil! Egad, I think I am very civil.

*[Kisses her again.]*

*Enter Servant and Bellamy.*

**Serv.** Sir, Mr. Bellamy.

**Rang.** Damn your impertinence—Oh, Mr. Bellamy, your servant.

**Milli.** What shall I say to my mistress?

**Rang.** Bid her make half a dozen more; but be sure you bring them home yourself. *[Exit Milliner.]* Pshaw! pox! Mr. Bellamy, how should you like to be serv'd so yourself?

**Bella.** How can you, Ranger, for a minute's pleasure, give an innocent girl the pain of heart I am confident she felt?—There was a modest blush upon her cheek convinces me she is honest.

**Rang.** May be so. I was resolv'd to try, however.

**Bella.** Fy, Ranger—Will you never think?



*Rang.* Yes, but I can't be always thinking. The law is a damnable dry study, Mr. Bellamy, and without something now and then to amuse and relax, it would be too much for my brain, I promise ye.—But I am a mighty sober fellow grown—Here have I been at it these three hours—but the wenches will never let me alone—

*Bella.* Three hours!—Why do you usually study in such shoes and stockings?

*Rang.* Rat your inquisitive eyes. *Ex pede Herculem.* Egad, you have me. The truth is, I am but this moment return'd from the tavern. What, Frankly, here too!

*Enter Frankly.*

*Frank.* My boy Ranger! I am heartily glad to see you. Bellamy, let me embrace you; you are the person I want. I have been at your lodgings, and was directed hither.

*Rang.* It is to him, then, I am oblig'd for this visit. But with all my heart—He is the only man to whom I don't care how much I am oblig'd.

*Bella.* Your humble Servant, Sir.

*Frank.* You know, Ranger, I want no inducement to be with you. But—You look sadly—What—No mercilefs jade has—has she?

*Rang.* No, no. Sound as a roach, my lad. I only got a little too much liquor last night, which I have not slept off yet.

*Bella.* Thus, Frankly, it is every day. All the morning his head aches, at noon he begins to clear up, towards evening he is good company, and all night he is carefully providing for the same course the next day.

*Rang.* Why, I must own, my ghostly father, I did relapse a little last night, just to furnish out a decent confession for the day.

*Frank.* And is he now doing penance for it? Were you his confessor, indeed, you could not well desire more.

*Rang.* Charles, he sets up for a confessor with the worst grace in the world. Here has he been reproving me for being but decently civil to my milliner. Plague! because the coldness of his constitution makes him insensible of a fine woman's charms, every body else must be so too.

*Bella.* I am no less sensible of their charms than you are, though I cannot kiss every woman I meet, or fall in love, as you call it, with every face which has the bloom of youth upon it. I would only have you a little more frugal of your pleasures.

*Frank.* My dear friend, this is very pretty talking! But let me tell you, it is in the power of the very first glance from a fine woman utterly to disconcert all your philosophy.

*Bella.* It must be from a fine woman then, and not such as are generally reputed so—And it must be a thorough acquaintance with her too, that will ever make an impression on my heart.

*Rang.* Would I could see it once! For when a man has been all his life hoarding up a stock, without allowing himself common necessities; it tickles me to the soul to see him lay it out all upon a wrong bottom, and become bankrupt at last.

*Bella.* Well, I don't care how soon you see it. For the minute I find a woman capable of friendship, love, and tenderness, with good-sense enough to be always easy, and good-nature enough to like me; I will immediately put it to the trial, which of us shall have the greatest share of happiness from the sex, you or I.

*Rang.* By marrying her, I suppose! Capable of friendship, love, and tenderness; ha, ha, ha! That a man of your sense should talk so. If she be capable of love, 'tis all I require of my mistress; and as every

woman who is young is capable of love, I am very reasonably in love with every young woman I meet—My Lord Coke, in a case I read this morning speaks my sense.

*Both.* My lord Coke!

*Rang.* Yes, my Lord Coke. What he says of one woman, I say of the whole sex: *I take their bodies, you their minds; which has the better bargain!*

*Frank.* There is no arguing with so great a lawyer. Suppose, therefore, we adjourn the debate to some other time. I have some serious business with Mr. Bellamy; and you want sleep, I am sure.

*Rang.* Sleep! mere loss of time, and hindrance of business—We men of spirit, Sir, are above it.

*Bella.* Whither shall we go?

*Frank.* Into the Park. My Chariot is at the door.

*Bella.* Then, if my servant calls, you'll send him after us. *Exit.*

*Rang.* I will. [*Looking on the Card.*] Clarinda's compliments—A pox of this head of mine! never once to ask where she was to be found. It's plain she is not one of us, or I should not have been so misinformed in my inquiries—No matter—she shall meet her in my walks.

*Servant enters.*

*Serv.* There is no letter nor message, Sir.

*Rang.* Then my things, to dress. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II. A Chamber.

*Enter Mrs. Strickland, and Jacintha, meeting.*

*Mrs. Stri.* Good-morrow, my dear Jacintha.

*Jac.* Good-morrow to you, Madam. I have brought my work, and intend to sit with you this morning. I hope you have got the better of your fatigue. Where is Clarinda? I should be glad if she would come, and work with us.

*Mrs. Stri.* She work! She is too fine a lady to do any thing. She is not stirring yet—we must let her have her rest. People of her waste of spirits require more time to recruit again.

*Jac.* It is pity she should be ever tir'd with work, she is so agreeable to every body else. I am prodigiously pleas'd with her company.

*Mrs. Stri.* And when you are better acquainted with her, you will be still more pleas'd with her. You met her upon her partner at Bath; for, I fancy, of her rest has been disturb'd on his account.

*Jac.* Was he really a pretty fellow?

*Mrs. Stri.* That I can't tell. I did not do myself, and so did not much mind him. You must have the whole story from herself.

*Jac.* Oh, I warrant ye I get it all out! No man is so proper to make discoveries in love, as those who are in the secret themselves.

*Enter Lucetta.*

*Lucet.* Madam, Mr. Strickland is enquiring for you. Here has been Mr. Buckle with a letter from his sister, which has made him very angry.

*Jac.* Mr. Bellamy said, indeed, he would see him once more, but I fear it will prove in vain. Your master I am here. [*Exit Lucetta.*] What signifies fortune, when it only makes us slaves to our people?

*Mrs. Stri.* Do not be uneasy, my Jacintha. You shall always find a friend in me: But as for Mr. Strickland, I know not what ill temper hangs about him lately. Nothing satisfies him. You saw how he received us when we came off our journey. The dear Clarinda was so good company, he was barely civil to her, and downright rude to me.

*Jac.* I cannot help saying, I did observe it.

*Mrs. Stri.* I saw you did. Hush! he's here.

*Enter Mr. Strickland.*

*Mrs. Stri.* Oh, your servant, madam! Here



received a letter from Mr. Bellamy, wherein he  
tells me I would once more hear what he has to say—  
I know my sentiments—Nay, so does he.

Jacin. For Heaven's sake consider, Sir, this is no  
sudden start of passion—We have known each other long. My father valu'd and lov'd  
him; and I am sure, were he alive, I should have his  
consent.

Mr. Strick. Don't tell me. Your father would not  
have you marry against his will; neither will I against  
mine: I am your father now.

Jacin. And you take a fatherly care of me!

Mr. Strick. I wish I had never had any thing to do  
with you.

Jacin. You may easily get rid of the trouble.

Mr. Strick. By listening, I suppose, to the young  
gentleman's proposals.

Jacin. Which are very reasonable, in my opinion.

Mr. Strick. Oh, very modest ones truly; and a very  
modest gentleman he is that proposes them! A fool,  
to expect a lady of thirty thousand pounds fortune,  
could, by the care and prudence of her guardian, be  
grown away upon a young fellow not worth three  
hundred a year. He thinks being in love is an ex-  
cuse for this; but I am not in love. What does he  
think will excuse me?

Mrs. Strick. Well, but Mr. Strickland, I think  
the gentleman should be heard.

Mr. Strick. Well, well, seven o'clock's the time;  
and if the man has had the good fortune, since I saw  
him last, to persuade somebody or other to give him  
a better estate, I give him my consent—not else.  
His servant waits below. You may tell him, I shall  
be at home. [Exit Jacin.] But where is your friend,  
your other half, all this while? I thought you could  
not have breath'd a minute without your Clarinda.

Mrs. Strick. Why the truth is, I was going to see  
that makes her keep her chamber so long.

Mr. Strick. Look ye, Mrs. Strickland, you have  
been asking me for money this morning. In plain  
terms, not one shilling shall pass through these fingers  
till you have clear'd my house of this Clarinda.

Mrs. Strick. How can her innocent gaiety have of-  
fended you? She is a woman of honour, and has as  
many good qualities—

Mr. Strick. As women of honour generally have;  
I know it, and therefore am uneasy.

Mrs. Strick. But, Sir—

Mr. Strick. But, Madam—Clarinda, nor e'er a  
trick of fashion in England, shall live in my family  
to debauch it.

Mrs. Strick. Sir, she treated me with so much ci-  
vility in the country, that I thought I could not do  
less than invite her to spend as much time with me  
as town as her engagements would permit. I little  
imagin'd you could have been displeas'd at my having  
an agreeable a companion.

Mr. Strick. There was a time when I was com-  
pany enough for leisure hours.

Mrs. Strick. There was a time when every word  
of mine was sure of meeting with a smile: but those  
happy days, I know not why, have long been over.

Mr. Strick. I cannot bear a rival, even of your own  
sex. I hate the very name of female friends. No  
two of you can ever be an hour by yourselves, but  
one or both are the worse for it.

Mrs. Strick. Dear Mr. Strickland.

Mr. Strick. This I know—and will not suffer.

Mrs. Strick. It grieves me, Sir, to see you so much  
earnest: But to convince you how willing I am  
to make you easy in every thing, it shall be my re-  
quest to her to remove immediately.

Mr. Strick. Do it—Hark ye—your request?

—Why yours? 'tis mine—My command—  
Tell her so—I will be master of my own family,  
and I care not who knows it.

Mrs. Strick. You fright me, Sir—But it shall be  
as you please. [In tears.] [Goes out.]

Mr. Strick. Ha! have I gone too far? I am not  
master of myself—Mrs. Strickland!—[She returns.]  
Understand me right. I do not mean, by what I  
have said, that I suspect your innocence, but by  
crushing this growing friendship all at once, I may  
prevent a train of mischief which you do not fore-  
see. I was perhaps too harsh, therefore do it in your  
own way—But let me see the house fairly rid of her.

[Exit Mr. Strickland.]

Mrs. Strick. His earnestness in this affair amazes  
me; I am sorry I made this visit to Clarinda—  
and yet I'll answer for her honour—What can I  
say to her? Necessity must plead in my excuse—For  
at all events Mr. Strickland must be obey'd. [Exit.]

S C E N E III. St. James's Park.

Enter Bellamy and Frankly.

Frank. Now, Bellamy, I may unfold the secret of  
my heart to you with greater freedom; for though  
Ranger has honour, I am not in a humour to be  
laugh'd at. I must have one that will bear with my  
impertinence, soothe me into hope, and, like a friend  
indeed, with tenderness advise me.

Bella. I thought you appeared more grave than  
usual.

Frank. Oh! Bellamy, my soul is full of joy, of  
pain, hope, despair, and extasy, that no word but  
love is capable of expressing what I feel.

Bella. Is love the secret Ranger is not fit to hear?  
In my mind, he wou'd prove the more able counsellor.  
And is all the gay indifference of my friend at  
last reduc'd to love?

Frank. Even so—Never was prude more reso-  
lute in chastity and ill-nature, than I was fix'd in in-  
difference: But love has rais'd me from that inac-  
tive state above the being of a man.

Bella. Faith, Charles, I begin to think it has—  
But pray, bring this rapture into order a little, and  
tell me regularly, how, where, and when?

Frank. If I was not most unreasonably in love,  
those horrid questions would stop my mouth at once.  
But as I am arm'd against reason—I answer—at  
Bath—on Tuesday she danced and caught me.

Bella. Danced!—and was that all? But who is  
she? What is her name? her fortune? where does  
she live?

Frank. Hold! hold! not so many hard questions.  
Have a little mercy. I know but little of her, that's  
certain; but all I do know, you shall have. That  
evening was the first of her appearing at Bath. The  
moment I saw her, I resolv'd to ask the favour of  
her hand. But the easy freedom with which she  
gave it, and her unaffected good-humour during the  
whole night, gain'd such a power over my heart, as  
none of her sex could ever boast before. I waited  
on her home, and the next morning, when I went  
to pay the usual compliments, the bird was flown.  
She had set out for London two hours before; and  
in a chariot and fix—you rogue.

Bella. But was it her own, Charles?

Frank. That I don't know; but it looks better  
than being drag'd to town in the stage. That day  
and the next I spent in inquiries. I waited on the  
ladies who came with her. They knew nothing of  
her. So, without learning either her name or for-  
tune, I e'en call'd for my boots, and rode post after her.

Bella. And how do you find yourself after your  
journey?



*Frank.* Why, as yet, I own, I am but upon a cold scent. But a woman of her sprightliness and gentility cannot but frequent all public places? and when once she is found, the pleasure of the chase will over-pay the pains of rousing her.—Oh! *Bellamy*, there was something peculiarly charming in her that seem'd to claim my farther acquaintance: and if in the other more familiar parts of life she shines with that superior lustre, and at last I win her to my arms, how shall I bless my resolution in pursuing her?

*Bella.* But if at last she should prove unworthy—

*Frank.* I would endeavour to forget her.

*Bella.* Promise me that, *Charles*, [*Takes his hand.*] and I allow—But we are interrupted.

*Enter Jack Meggot.*

*Jack Meg.* Whom have we here? my old friend *Frankly*? Thou art grown a mere antique since I saw thee? How hast thou done these five hundred years?

*Frank.* Even as you see me; well, and at your service ever.

*Jack Meg.* Ha! who's that?

*Frank.* A friend of mine. *Mr. Bellamy*, this is *Jack Meggot*, Sir, as honest a fellow as any in life.

*Jack Meg.* Pho! pr'ythee! pox! *Charles*—don't be silly—Sir, I am your humble—Any one who is a friend of my *Frankly's*, I am proud of embracing.

*Bella.* Sir, I shall endeavour to deserve your civility.

*Jack Meg.* Oh! Sir—Well, *Charles*! what! dumb? Come, come; you may talk, though you have nothing to say, as I do—Let us hear, where have you been?

*Frank.* Why, for this last week, *Jack*, I have been at Bath.

*Jack Meg.* Bath! the most ridiculous place in life!—Amongst tradesmen's wives that hate their husbands, and people of quality that had rather go to the devil than stay at home. People of no taste—no *goust*—and for *divertimenti*, if it were not for the puppet-show, *la virtu* would be dead amongst them.—But the news, *Charles*—the ladies—I fear, your time hung heavy on your hands, by the small stay you made there.

*Frank.* Faith, and so it did *Jack*. The ladies are grown such ideots in love—The cards have so debauch'd their five senses, that love, almighty love himself, is utterly neglected.

*Jack Meg.* It is the strangest thing in life, but it is just so with us abroad. Faith, *Charles*! to tell you a secret, which I don't care if all the world knows, I am almost surfeited with the services of the ladies; the modest ones I mean. The vast variety of duties they expect—as dressing up to the fashion, losing fashionably, keeping fashionable hours, drinking fashionable liquors, and fifty other such irregular niceties, so ruin a man's pocket and constitution, that foregad! he must have the estate of a Duke, and the strength of a Gondolier, who would list himself into their service!

*Frank.* A free confession truly, *Jack*, for one of your coat.

*Bella.* The ladies are obliged to you.

*Enter Buckle, with a letter to Bellamy.*

*Jack Meg.* Oh lord! *Charles*! I have had the greatest misfortune in life, since I saw you.—Poor *Orho*, that I brought from Rome with me, is dead.

*Frank.* Well! well! get you another, and all will be well again.

*Jack Meg.* No! the rogue broke me so much china, and gnaw'd my Spanish leather shoes so sithily, that when he was dead, I began not to endure him.

*Bella.* Exactly at seven! Run, back, and assure

him I will not fail. [*Exit Buckle.*] Dead? who was the gentleman?

*Jack Meg.* This gentleman was my monkey,—an odd sort of a fellow that used to divert and please every body so at Rome, that he made one in our *conversation*—But, *Mr. Bellamy*, saw a servant, I hope no engagement. For you positively shall dine with me. I have the *macaroni* in life. Oblige me so far.

*Bella.* Sir—your servant! what say you, *Frank*?

*Jack Meg.* Pho! pox! *Charles*! you shall. My aunts think you begin to neglect them; old maids, you know, are the most jealous creatures in life.

*Frank.* *Ranger* swears they can't be maids, are so good-natur'd. Well! I agree, on condition may eat what I please, and go away just when I please.

*Jack Meg.* Ay! ay! you shall do just what you will. But how shall we do? My post-chaise will carry us all.

*Frank.* My chariot is here; and I will conduct *Mr. Bellamy*.

*Bella.* *Mr. Meggot*—I beg pardon, I can't possibly dine out of town! I have an engagement in the evening.

*Jack Meg.* Out of town! No my dear, I live by. I see one of the *dilettanti*, I would not be speaking to for the universe. And so I expect at three.

*Frank.* Ha! ha! ha! and so you thought you had at least fifty miles to go post for a spoonful of *macaroni*.

*Bella.* I suppose, then, he is just come out of country.

*Frank.* Nor that neither. I would venture to wager, from his own house hither, or to an auction or two of old dirty pictures, is the utmost of his travels to-day: or he may have been in pursuit, perhaps, of a new cargo of Venetian tooth-picks.

*Bella.* A special acquaintance I have made to-day.

*Frank.* For all this, *Bellamy*, he has a heart worthy your friendship. He spends his estate freely, and you cannot oblige him more, than by showing him how he can be of service to you.

*Bella.* Now you say something. It is the heart *Frankly*, I value in a man.

*Frank.* Right!—and there is a heart even in a woman's breast that is worth the purchase, or judgment has deceiv'd me. Dear *Bellamy*, I know your concern for me. See her first, and then blame me, if you can.

*Bella.* So far from blaming you, *Charles*, that my endeavours can be serviceable, I will beat the bushes with you.

*Frank.* That I am afraid will not do. For you know less of her than I. But if in your walks you meet a finer woman than ordinary, let her not escape till I have seen her.—Wheresoever she is, she can not long lie hid. [*Exit*]

## ACT II. SCENE I.

*St. James's Park.*

*Enter Clarinda, Jacintha, and Mrs. Strickland.*

*Jacin.* A Y! ay! we both stand condemn'd of our own mouths.

*Clar.* Why—I cannot but own—I never had thought of any man that troubled me, but of him.

*Mrs. Strick.* Then I dare swear, by this time, you heartily repent your leaving Bath so soon.

*Clar.* Indeed you are mistaken. I have not been one scruple since.



*Jacin.* Why, what one inducement can he have to think of you again?

*Clar.* Oh! the greatest of all inducements, curiosity. Let me assure you, a woman's surest hold over a man is to keep him in uncertainty. As soon as ever you put him out of doubt, you put him out of your power: but when once a woman has awak'd his curiosity, she may lead him a dance of many a troublesome mile without the least fear of losing him at last.

*Jacin.* Now do I heartily wish he may have spirit enough to follow, and use you as you deserve. Such spirit, with but a little knowledge of our sex, might put that heart of yours into a strange flutter.

*Clar.* I care not how soon. I long to meet with such a fellow. Our modern beaux are such jointed babies in love, they have no feeling. They are entirely insensible either of pain or pleasure, but from their own dear persons: and according as we flatter or affront their beauty, they admire or forsake ours. They are not worthy even of our displeasure: and, in short, abusing them is but so much ill-nature merely thrown away. But the man of sense, who values himself upon his high abilities: or the man of wit, who thinks a woman beneath his conversation—To see such the subjects of our power, the slaves of our frowns and smiles, is glorious indeed!

*Mrs. Striſt.* No man of sense, or wit either, if he be truly so, ever did, or ever can think a woman of merit beneath his wisdom to converse with.

*Jacin.* Nor will such a woman value herself upon making such a lover uneasy.

*Clar.* Amazing! Why, every woman can give ease! You cannot be in earnest.

*Mrs. Striſt.* I can assure you she is, and has put in practice the doctrine she has been teaching.

*Clar.* Impossible! Who ever heard the name of love mention'd, without an idea of torment? But may let us hear?

*Jacin.* Nay, there is nothing to hear that I know of.

*Clar.* So I suspected, indeed! The novel is not likely to be long, when the lady is so well prepar'd for the denouement.

*Jacin.* The novel, as you call it, is not so short as you may imagine. I and my spark have been long acquainted. As he was continually with my father, I soon perceiv'd he lov'd me, and the manner of his expressing that love was what pleas'd and won me most.

*Clar.* Well: and how was it? The old bait? Flattery? Dear flattery, I warrant ye.

*Jacin.* No, indeed—I had not the pleasure of hearing my person, wit and beauty painted out with forced praises; but I had a more sensible delight in perceiving the drift of his whole behaviour was to make every hour of my time pass away agreeably.

*Clar.* The rustic! What, did he never say a handsome thing of your person?

*Mrs. Striſt.* He did, it seems, what pleas'd her better. He flatter'd her good sense, as much as a cunning lover would have done her beauty.

*Clar.* On my conscience you are well match'd.

*Jacin.* So well, that if my guardian denies me happiness, (and this evening he is to pass his final sentence) nothing is left but to break my prison, and get into my lover's arms for safety.

*Clar.* Hey! day! O' my conscience thou art a brave girl. Thou art the very first prude that ever was honest enough to avow her passion for a man.

*Jacin.* And thou art the first finish'd coquet who ever had any honesty at all.

*Mrs. Striſt.* Come, come! You are both too good for either of those characters.

*Clar.* And, my dear Mrs. Striſtland, here, is the first young married woman of spirit, who has an ill-natur'd fellow for a husband, and never once thinks of using him as he deserves—Good Heav'n! If I had such a husband—

*Mrs. Striſt.* You wou'd be just as unhappy as I am.

*Clar.* But come now—confess—do not you long to be a widow?

*Mrs. Striſt.* Would I were any thing but what I am!

*Clar.* Then go the nearest way about it. I'd break that stout heart of his in less than a fortnight. I'd make him know—

*Mrs. Striſt.* Pray be silent. You know my resolution.

*Clar.* I know you have no resolution.

*Mrs. Striſt.* You are a mad creature, but I forgive you.

*Clar.* It is all meant kindly, I assure you. But since you won't be persuaded to your good, I will think of making you easy in your submission as soon as ever I can. I dare say I may have the same lodging I had last year. I can know immediately—I see my chair: and so ladies both, adieu! [*Exit Clarinda.*]

*Jacin.* Come, Mrs. Striſtland, we shall but just have time to get home before Mr. Bellamy comes.

*Mrs. Striſt.* Let us return, then, to our common prison. You must forgive my ill-nature, Jacintha, if I almost wish Mr. Striſtland may refuse to join your hand where your heart is given.

*Jacin.* Lord! Madam, what do you mean?

*Mrs. Striſt.* Self-interest only, child! Methinks your company in the country would soften all my sorrows, and I could bear them patiently.

*Re-enter Clarinda.*

*Clar.* Dear Mrs. Striſtland—I am so confus'd, and so out of breath—

*Mrs. Striſt.* Why, what is the matter?

*Jacin.* I protest you fright me.

*Clar.* Oh! I have no time to recover myself, I am so frighten'd, and so pleas'd. In short, then, the dear man is here.

*Mrs. Striſt.* Here—Lord—Where?

*Clar.* I met him this instant; I saw him at a distance, turn'd short, and ran hither directly. Let us go home. I tell you, he follows me.

*Mrs. Striſt.* Why, had you not better stay, and let him speak to you?

*Clar.* Ay!—But then—He won't know where I live, without my telling him.

*Mrs. Striſt.* Come then. Ha! ha! ha!

*Jacin.* Ay! Poor Clarinda!—*Allons donc.* [*Exit.*]

*Enter Frankly.*

*Frank.* Sure that must be she! Her shape and easy air cannot be so exactly copied by another.---Now, you young rogue, Cupid, guide me directly to her, as you would the surest arrow in your quiver. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

*Changes to the Street before Mr. Striſtland's Door.*

*Re-enter Clarinda, Jacintha, and Mrs. Striſtland.*

*Clar.* Lord!—Dear Jacintha—or Heaven's sake make haste. He'll overtake us before we get in.

*Jacin.* Overtake us? Why, he is not in sight!

*Clar.* Is not he!—Ha! sure I have not dropt my twee—

[*I would not have him lose sight of me, neither.* [*Aside.*]

*Mrs. Striſt.* Here he is—

*Clar.* In—In—In then.

*Jacin.* [*Laughing.*] What, without your twee?

*Clar.* Pshaw! I have lost nothing—In—I'll follow you. [*Exeunt into the house, Clarinda last.*]

*Enter Frankly.*

*Frank.* It is impossible I should be deceiv'd: my



eyes and the quick pulses at the heart assure me it is she. Ha! 'tis she by heav'n! and the door left open too—A fair invitation, by all the rules of love. [Exit.]

## S C E N E III.

*Changes to an Apartment in Mr. Strickland's House.*

*Enter Clarinda, Frankly following her.*

*Frank.* I hope, Madam, you will excuse the boldness of this intrusion, since it is owing to your own behaviour that I am forc'd to it.

*Clar.* To my behaviour, Sir?

*Frank.* You cannot but remember me at Bath, Madam, where I so lately had the favour of your hand.

*Clar.* I do remember, Sir; but I little expected any wrong interpretation of my behaviour from one who had so much the appearance of a gentleman.

*Frank.* What I saw of your behaviour was so just, it would admit of no misrepresentation. I only fear'd, whatever reason you had to conceal your name from me at Bath, you might have the same to do it now; and though my happiness was so nearly concern'd, I rather chose to venture thus abruptly after you, than be impertinently inquisitive.

*Clar.* Sir, there seems to be so much civility in your rudeness, that I can easily forgive it; though I don't see how your happiness is at all concern'd.

*Frank.* No, Madam! I believe you are the only lady who could, with the qualifications you are mistress of, be insensible of the power they give you over the happiness of our sex.

*Clar.* How vain should we women be, if you gentlemen were but wise! If you did not all of you say the same things to every woman, we should certainly be foolish enough to believe some of you were in earnest.

*Frank.* Could you have the least sense of what I feel whilst I am speaking, you would know me to be in earnest, and what I say to be the dictates of a heart that admires you; may I not say, that—

*Clar.* Sir, this is carrying the—

*Frank.* When I danced with you at Bath, I was charm'd with your whole behaviour, and felt the same tender admiration: but my hope of seeing you afterwards kept in my passion till a more proper time should offer. You cannot therefore blame me now, if, after having lost you once, I do not suffer an inexcusable modesty to prevent my making use of this second opportunity.

*Clar.* This behaviour, Sir, is so different from the gaiety of your conversation then, that I am at a loss how to answer you.

*Frank.* There is nothing, Madam, which could take off from the gaiety with which your presence inspires every heart, but the fear of losing you. How can I be otherwise than as I am, when I know not but you may leave London as abruptly as you did Bath?

*Enter Lucetta.*

*Lucet.* Madam, the tea is ready, and my mistress waits for you.

*Clar.* Very well, I come—[Exit Lucetta.] You see, Sir, I am call'd away; but I hope you will excuse it, when I leave you with an assurance, that the business which brings me to town will keep me here some time.

*Frank.* How generous it is in you, thus to ease the heart that knew not how to ask for such a favour—I fear to offend—But this house, I suppose, is yours?

*Clar.* You will hear of me, if not find me here.

*Frank.* I then take my leave. [Exit.]

*Clar.* I'm undone!—He has me!

*Enter Mrs. Strickland.*

*Mrs. Strick.* Well! How do you and yourself?

*Clar.* I do find—that if he goes on, as he has begun, I shall certainly have him without giving him the least uneasiness.

*Mrs. Strick.* A very terrible prospect, indeed!

*Clar.* But I must teize him a little—Where's Jacintha? How will she laugh at me, if I become pupil of her's, and learn to give ease? No! positively I shall never do it.

*Mrs. Strick.* Poor Jacintha has met with what fear'd, from Mr. Strickland's temper—an utter denial. I know not why, but he really grows more and more ill-natur'd.

*Clar.* Well! now do I heartily wish my affairs were in his power a little, that I might have a few difficulties to surmount.—I love difficulties—and yet, I don't know—it is as well as it is.

*Mrs. Strick.* Ha, ha, ha! Come, the tea waits. [Exit.]

*Enter Mr. Strickland.*

*Mr. Strick.* These doings in my house distract me? I met a fine gentleman—when I enquir'd who he was! why, he came to Clarinda. I met a footman too, and he came to Clarinda. I shall not be easy till she is decamp'd. My wife had the character of a virtuous woman—and they have been long acquainted. But then they were by themselves at Bath! That hurts—that hurts—They must be watch'd—they must—I know them. I know all their wiles, and the best of them are hypocrites. Ha!—[Lucetta passes over the stage.] Suppose I bribe the maid—She is of their count—the manager of their secrets—It shall be for Money will do it, and I shall know all that passes Lucetta!

*Lucet.* Sir.

*Mr. Strick.* Lucetta!

*Re-enter Lucetta.*

*Lucet.* Sir.—[If he should suspect, and search now, I'm undone.]

*Mr. Strick.* She is a fly girl, and may be serviceable.

*Lucet.* Lucetta, you are a good girl, and have an honest face. I like it. It looks as if it carried no deceit in it. [Yet, if she should be false, she can do me most harm.]

*Lucet.* Pray, Sir, speak out.

*Mr. Strick.* [Aside.] No! she is a woman, and it is the highest imprudence to trust her.

*Lucet.* I am not able to understand you.

*Mr. Strick.* I am glad of it. I would not have you understand me.

*Lucet.* Then what did you call me for? [If I should be in love with my face, it would be a sport.]

*Mr. Strick.* [Aside.] Tester; ay, Tester is the proper person—Lucetta, tell Tester I want him.

*Lucet.* Yes, Sir—[Aside.] Mighty odd, that it gives me time, however, to send Buckle with a letter to his master. [Exit Lucetta.]

*Mr. Strick.* Could I but be once well satisfied that my wife had really finish'd me, I believe I should be as quiet as if I were sure of the contrary.—Whilst I am in doubt, I am miserable.

*Enter Tester.*

*Tester.* Does your honour please to want me?

*Mr. Strick.* Ay, Tester—I need not fear. The honesty of his service, and the goodness of his heart, make me secure. I will trust him. [Aside.]—Tester, I think I have been a tolerable good master to you.

*Test.* Yes, Sir—very tolerable.

*Mr. Strick.* [Aside.] I like his simplicity well. He promises honesty. I have a secret, Tester, to impart to you—A thing of the greatest importance.



ce. Look upon me, and don't stand picking your one know whose dust it carries.

gers.  
Tester. Yes, Sir—No, Sir.

Mr. Stri<sup>t</sup>. But will not his simplicity expose him more to Lucetta's cunning? Yes, yes! she will worm the secret out of him. I had better trust her with it at once.—So——I will. [*Aside.*] Tester, send Lucetta hither.

Tester. Yes, Sir——Here she is.

*Re-enter Lucetta.*

Lucetta, my master wants you.

Mr. Stri<sup>t</sup>. Get you down, Tester.

Tester. Yes, Sir, [*Exit Tester.*

Lucet. If you want me, Sir, I beg you would make haste, for I have a thousand things to do.

Mr. Stri<sup>t</sup>. Well! well! what I have to say will not take up much time, could I but persuade you to be honest.

Lucet. Why, Sir, I hope you don't suspect my honesty?

Mr. Stri<sup>t</sup>. Well! well! I believe you honest.

[*Shuts the door.*

Lucet. What can be at the bottom of all this! [*Aside.*

Mr. Stri<sup>t</sup>. So! We cannot be too private. Come hither, huffy! nearer yet.

Lucet. Laud, Sir! You are not going to be rude? I vow, I will call out.

Mr. Stri<sup>t</sup>. Hold your tongue. Does the baggage laugh at me! [*Aside.*] She does—She mocks me, and will reveal it to my wife; and her insolence upon it will be more insupportable to me than cuckoldom itself. I have not leisure time now, Lucetta.—Some other time—Hush! did not the bell ring? Yes, yes: my wife wants you. Go, go, go to her. [*Pushes her out.*] There is no hell on earth like being a slave to suspicion. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. The Piazza, Covent-Garden.

*Enter Bellamy and Jack Meggot.*

Bella. Nay, nay, I would not put your family into any confusion.

Jack Meg. None in life, my dear, I assure you. I will go and order every thing this instant for her reception.

Bella. You are too obliging, Sir; but you need not be in this hurry, for I am in no certainty when I shall trouble you. I only know that my Jacintha has taken such a resolution.

Jack Meg. Therefore we should be prepar'd; for when once a lady has such a resolution in her head, she is upon the rack till she executes it. Foregod! Mr. Bellamy, this must be a girl of fire.

*Enter Frankly.*

Frank. Buxom and lively as the bounding Doe.—Fair as painting can express, or youthful poets fancy when they love. Tol de rol, lol! [*Singing and dancing.*

Bella. Who is this you talk thus rapturously of?

Frank. Who should it be, but—I shall know her name to-morrow. [*Sings and dances.*

Jack Meg. What is the matter, ho! Is the man mad?

Frank. Even so, gentlemen; as mad as love and joy can make me.

Bella. But inform us whence this joy proceeds?

Frank. Joy! joy! my lads! She's found! my perdition! my charmer!

Jack Meg. Egad! her charms have bewitch'd the man, I think——But who is she?

Bella. Come, come, tell us who is this wonder?

Frank. But will you say nothing?

Bella. Nothing, as I live.

Frank. Nor you?

Jack Meg. I'll be as silent as the grave——

Frank. With a tombstone upon it, to let every

Jack Meg. I'll be as secret as a debauch'd prude—

Frank. Whose sanctity every one suspects. Jack, Jack, 'tis not in thy nature. Keeping a secret is worse to thee than keeping thy accounts. But to leave fooling, listen to me both, that I may whisper it into your ears, that echo may not catch the sinking sound—I cannot tell who she is, 'faith—Tol de rol, lol——

Jack Meg. Mad! mad! very mad!

Frank. All I know of her is, that she is a charming woman, and has given me liberty to visit her again——Bellamy, 'tis she, the lovely she. [*Aside.*

Bella. So I did suppose. [*To Frankly.*

Jack Meg. Poor Charles! For heav'n's sake, Mr. Bellamy, persuade him home to his chamber, whilst I prepare every thing for you at home. Adieu! —[*Aside to Bellamy*] B'ye, Charles! Ha, ha, ha!

Frank. Oh, love! thou art a gift worthy of a god, indeed! Dear Bellamy, nothing now could add to my pleasure, but to see my friend as deep in love as I am.

Bella. I shew my heart is capable of love, by the friendship it bears to you.

Frank. The light of friendship looks but dim before the brighter flame of love. Love is the spring of cheerfulness and joy. Why, how dull and phlegmatic do you shew to me now! Whilst I am all life; light as a feather'd Mercury.—You dull and cold as earth and water; I light and warm as air and fire. These are the only elements in love's world!—Why, Bellamy, for shame! get thee a mistress, and be sociable.

Bella. I am now going to——

Frank. Why that face now? Your humble servant, Sir. My flood of joy shall not be stoppt by your melancholy fits, I assure you. [*Going.*

Bella. Stay, Frankly; I beg you stay. What would you say now, if I really were in love?

Frank. Why, 'faith, thou hast such romantic notions of sense and honour, that I know not what to say.

Bella. To confess the truth, then, I am in love.

Frank. And do you confess it as if it were a sin? Proclaim it aloud. Glory in it. Boast of it as your greatest virtue. Swear it with a lover's oath, and I will believe you.

Bella. Why then, by the bright eyes of her I love——

Frank. Well said!

Bella. By all that's tender, amiable, and soft in woman——

Frank. Bravo!

Bella. I swear, I am as true an enamorado as ever tagg'd rhyme.

Frank. And art thou then thoroughly in love? Come to my arms, thou dear companion of my joys

[*They embrace*

*Enter Ranger.*

Rang. Why——Hey!——is there never a wench to be got for love nor money?

Bella. Pshaw! Ranger here!

Rang. Yes, Ranger is here, and perhaps does not come so impertinently as you may imagine. Faith! I think I have the knack of finding out secrets. Nay, never look so queer——Here is letter, Mr. Bellamy, that seems to promise you better diversion than your hugging one another.

Bella. What do you mean?

Rang. Do you deal much in these paper tokens.

Bella. Oh! the dear, kind creature! It is from herself. [*To Frank*

Rang. What, is it a pair of lac'd shoes she wants? Or have the boys broke her windows?

Bella. Hold your prophane tongue!



*Frank.* Nay, pr'ythee, Bellamy, don't keep it to yourself, as if her whole affections were contained in those few lines.

*Rang.* Pr'ythee, let him alone to his silent raptures. But it is, as I always said——Your grave men ever are the greatest whoremasters.

*Bella.* I cannot be disoblig'd now, say what you will. But how came this into your hands?

*Rang.* Your servant Buckle and I chang'd commissions. He went on my errand, and I came on his.

*Bella.* 'Sdeath! I want him this very instant.

*Rang.* He will be here presently! but I demand to know what I have brought you?

*Frank.* Ay! ay! out with it! You know we never blab, and may be of service.

*Bella.* Twelve o'clock! oh! the dear hour.

*Rang.* Why, it is a pretty convenient time, indeed.

*Bella.* By all that's happy, she promises in this letter here——to leave her guardian this very night——and run away with me.

*Rang.* How is this?

*Bella.* Nay, I know not how myself——she says at the bottom——*Your servant has full instructions from Lucetta, how to equip me for my expedition.---I will not trust myself home with you to-night, because I know it is inconvenient; therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging, it is no matter how far off my guardian's.*

*Your's,* Jacintha.

*Rang.* Carry her to a bagnio, and there you may lodge with her.

*Frank.* Why, this must be a girl of spirit, faith!

*Bella.* And beauty equal to her sprightliness. I love her, and she loves me——She has thirty thousand to her fortune.

*Rang.* The devil she has!

*Bella.* And never plays at cards.

*Rang.* Nor does any one thing like any other woman, I suppose.

*Frank.* Not so, I hope, neither.

*Bella.* Oh! Frankly, Ranger, I never felt such ease before. The secret's out, and you don't laugh at me.

*Frank.* Laugh at thee?—for loving a woman of thirty thousand pounds! Thou art a most unaccountable fellow.

*Rang.* How the devil could he work her up to this? I never could have had the face to have done it. But——I know not how——there is a degree of assurance in you modest gentlemen, which we impudent fellows never can come up to.

*Bella.* Oh! your servant, good Sir. You should not abuse me now, Ranger, but do all you can to assist me.

*Rang.* Why, look ye, Bellamy, I am a damnable unlucky fellow——and so will have nothing to do in this affair. I'll take care to be out of the way, so as to do you no harm. That is all I can answer for: and so——success attend you. [*Going*] I cannot leave you quite to yourself neither, for if this should prove a round-house affair, as I make no doubt it will, believe I may have more interest there than you: and so, Sir, you may hear of me at—— [*Whispers.*]

*Bella.* For shame, Ranger! the most noted gaming-house in town.

*Rang.* Forgive me this once, my boy. I must go, faith, to pay a debt of honour to some of the greatest scoundrels in town. [*Exit.*]

*Frank.* But where do you design to lodge her?

*Bella.* At Mr. Meggot's——He is already gone to prepare for her reception.

*Frank.* The properest place in the world. His wits will entertain her with honour.

*Bella.* And the newness of her acquaintance will prevent it's being suspected——Frankly, give me your hand. This is a very critical time.

*Frank.* Pho! none of your musty reflections now. When a man is in love to the very brink of matrimony, what the devil has he to do with Plutarch and Seneca? Here is your servant with a face full of business——I'll leave you together——I shall be at the King's Arms, where, if you want my assistance, you may find me. [*Exit.*]

*Enter Buckle.*

*Bella.* So——Buckle——you seem to have your hands full.

*Buck.* Not fuller than my head, Sir, I promise you. You have had your letter, I hope?

*Bella.* Yes, and in it she refers me to you for my instructions.

*Buck.* Why, the affair stands thus.——As Mr. Strickland sees the door lock'd and barred every night himself, and takes the key up with him, it is impossible for her to escape any way but through the window: for which purpose I have a ladder of ropes.

*Bella.* Good——

*Buck.* And because a hoop, as the ladies wear them now, is not the most decent dress to come down a ladder in——I have in this other bundle a suit of boy's cloaths, which I believe will fit her. At least, it will serve the time she will want it.——You will soon be for pulling it off, I suppose.

*Bella.* Why, you are in spirits, you rogue.

*Buck.* These I am now to convey to Lucetta——Have you any thing to say, Sir?

*Bella.* Nothing, but that I will not fail at the hour appointed——Bring me word to Mr. Meggot's how you go on. Succeed in this, and it shall make your fortune. [*Exeunt.*]

### ACT III. SCENE I.

*The Street before Mr. Strickland's House.*

*Enter Bellamy in a Chairman's Coat.*

*Bella.* **H**OW tediously have the minutes past these last few hours! and the envious rogues will fly, no lightning quicker, when we would have them stay——Hold, let me not mistake——This is the house. [*Pulls out his watch.*] By heaven, it is not yet the hour!——I hear somebody coming. The moon's so bright——I had better not be here till the happy instant comes. [*Exit.*]

*Enter Frankly.*

*Frank.* Wine is no antidote to love, but rather feeds the flame. Now am I such an amorous puppy, that I cannot walk straight home, but must come out of my way to take a view of my queen's palace by moon-light——Ay, here stands the temple where my goddess is adored! the doors open! [*Retires.*]

*Enter Lucetta.*

*Lucet.* [*Under the window.*] Madam, Madam, hush! Madam——How shall I make her hear?

*Jacintha in Boy's Cloaths at the Window.*

*Jacin.* Who is there? What's the matter?

*Lucet.* It is I, Madam; you must not pretend to stir till I give the word——You'll be discover'd if you do.

*Frank.* [*Aside.*] What do I see! a man. My heart misgives me!

*Lucet.* My master is below sitting up for Mrs. Clarinda. He raves as if he was mad about her being out so late.

*Frank.* [*Aside.*] Here is some intrigue, or other. I must see more of this, before I give farther way to love.

*Lucet.* One minute he is in the street—the next he is in the kitchen: Now he will lock her out;



# The Suspicious Husband.

II

then he'll wait himself, and see what figure she  
takes when she vouchsafes to venture home.

Jacin. I long to have it over. Get me but once  
out of this house!

Frank. [Aside.] Cowardly rascal! Would I were  
in his place.

Lucet. If I can but fix him any where, I can let  
your myself——You have the ladder ready in  
case of necessity.

Jacin. Yes; yes! [Exit Lucetta.

Frank. [Aside.] The ladder! This must lead  
to some discovery. I shall watch you, my young  
gentleman, I shall.

Enter Clarinda, and Servant.

Clar. This whistle is a most enticing devil. I am  
afraid I am too late for Mr. Strickland's sober hours.

Jacin. Ha! I hear a noise!

Clar. No! I see a light in Jacintha's window. You  
may go home [Giving the servant money] I am safe.

Jacin. Sure it must be he! Mr. Bellamy——Sir.

Frank. [Aside.] Does not he call to me?

Clar. [Aside.] Ha! who's that? I am frightened  
out of my wits.——A man!——

Jacin. Is it you?

Frank. Yes! yes! 'tis I! 'tis I!

Jacin. Listen at the door.

Frank. I will; 'tis open——There is no noise——  
All's quiet.

Clar. Sure it is my spark——and talking to  
Jacintha. [Aside.

Frank. You may come down the ladder——quick.

Jacin. Catch it then, and hold it.

Frank. I have it. Now I shall see what sort of  
mistle my young spark is made of. [Aside.

Clar. With a ladder too! I'll assure you. But I  
must see the end of it. [Aside.

Jacin. Hark! did not somebody speak?

Frank. No! no! Be not fearful——Sdeath! we  
are discover'd. [Frankly and Clarinda retire.

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Hilt! hilt, are you ready?

Jacin. Yes, may I venture?

Lucet. Now is your time. He is in high con-  
ference with his privy counsellor, Mr. Tester. You  
may come down the back stairs, and I'll let you out.

[Exit Lucetta.

Jacin. I will, I will, and am heartily glad of it.

[Exit Jacintha.

Frank [Advancing.] May be so——But you and I  
shall have a few words before you get off so cleanly.

Clar. [Advancing.] How lucky it was I came  
home at this instant. I shall spoil his sport, I be-  
lieve. Do you know me, Sir?

Frank, I am amaz'd! You here! This was un-  
expected indeed!

Clar. Why, I believe, I do come a little unex-  
pectedly; but I shall amaze you more—I know the  
whole course of your amour; all the process of your  
mighty passion, from it's first rise——

Frank. What is all this!——

Clar. To the very conclusion, which you vainly  
try to effect this night.

Frank. By heaven, Madam, I know not what  
you mean. I came hither purely to contemplate on  
your beauties.

Clar. Any beauties, Sir, I find, will serve your turn.  
Do not hear you talk to her at the window?

Frank. Her!

Clar. Blush, blush, for shame; but be assur'd you  
have seen the last both of Jacintha, and me. [Exit.

Frank. Jacintha! Hear me, Madam——She is gone.  
I must certainly be Bellamy's mistress, and I have  
ruin'd all his scheme. This it is to be in luck.

Enter Bellamy behind.

Bella. Ha! A man under the window!

Frank. No, here she comes, and I may convey  
her to him.

Enter Jacintha, and runs to Frankly.

Jacin. I have at last got to you: Let's haste  
away——Oh!

Frank. Be not frighten'd, lady.

Jacin. Oh! am I abus'd, betray'd!

Bella. Betray'd, Frankly!

Frank. Bellamy!

Bella. I can scarce believe it, tho' I see it. Draw——

Frank. Hear me, Bellamy——Lady.

Jacin. Stay——do not fight.

Frank. I am innocent; it is all a mistake.

Jacin. For my sake, be quiet——We shall be dis-  
cover'd. The family is alarm'd.

Bella. You are obey'd——Mr. Frankly, there is  
but one way——

Frank. I understand you. Any time but now.  
You will certainly be discover'd. To-morrow——at  
your chambers——

Bella. Till then farewell. [Exeunt Bella, and Jacin.

Frank. Then, when he is cool, I may be heard;  
and the real, though suspicious account of this mat-  
ter may be believ'd. Yet amidst all this perplexity,  
it pleases me to find my fair incognita is jealous of  
my love.

Mr. Stric. [Within.] Where's Lucetta? Search  
every place.

Frank. Hark! the cry is up——I must be gone.

[Exit. Frankly.

Enter Mr. Strickland, Tester, and Servants.

Mr. Stric. She's gone! she's lost! I am cheated!  
Pursue her! Seek her!

Tester. Sir, all her cloaths are in her chamber.

Serv. Sir, Mrs. Clarinda said she was in boy's  
cloaths.

Mr. Stric. Ay, ay! I know it——Bellamy has her.  
Come along——Pursue her. [Exeunt.

Enter Ranger.

Rang. Hark!——Was not the noise this way?  
——No——There is no game stirring. This same god-  
dess, Diana, shines so bright with her chastity, that  
egad! I believe the wenches are ashamed to look her  
in the face. Now I am in an admirable mood for a  
frolic! have wine in my head, and money in my  
pocket, and so am furnish'd out for the cannonading  
any countess in Christendom! Ha! What have we  
here! a ladder! This cannot be placed here for no-  
thing——and a window open——Is it love, or mischief,  
now, that is going on within?——I care not which——  
I am in a right cue for either——Up I go——  
Stay——Do I not run a greater chance of spoiling  
sport than I do of making any? That I hate as  
much as I love the other——There can be no harm  
in seeing how the land lies——I'll up [Goes up softly.]  
——All is hush——Ha! a light; and a woman, by  
all that's lucky, neither old, nor crooked——I'll in——  
Ha! She is gone again. I will after her; [Goes  
in at the window.] and, for fear of the squawks of  
virtue, and the pursuit of the family, I will make  
sure of the ladder. Now, fortune, be my guide.

[Exit with the Ladder.

## SCENE II.

Mrs. Strickland's Dressing-Room.

Enter Mrs. Strickland, followed by Lucetta.

Mrs. Stric. Well! I am in great hopes she will  
escape.

Lucet. Never fear, Madam. The lovers have the  
start of him, and I warrant they keep it.

Mrs. Stric. Were Mr. Strickland ever to suspect



my being privy to her flight, I know not what might be the consequence.

Lucet. Then you had better be undressing—He may return immediately.

[As she is sitting down to the toilet, Ranger enters behind.

Rang. Young and beautiful— [Aside.

Lucet. I have watch'd him pretty narrowly of late, and never once suspected, till this morning—

Mrs. Stric. And who gave you authority to watch his actions, or pry into his secrets?

Lucet. I hope, Madam, you are not angry. I thought it might have been of service to you, to know my master was jealous.

Rang. And her husband jealous! If she does but send away the maid, I am happy.

Mrs. Stric. [Angrily.] Leave me.

Lucet. This it is to meddle with other people's affairs. [Exit in anger.

Rang. What a lucky dog I am! I never made a gentleman a cuckold before. Now, impudence assist me.

Mrs. Stric. [Rising.] Provoking! I am sure I never have deserv'd it of him.

Rang. Oh! cuckold him by all means, Madam, I am your man. [She shrieks.] Oh, fy, Madam! If you squawl so cursedly, you will be discover'd.

Mrs. Stric. Discover'd! What mean you, Sir? Do you come to abuse me?

Rang. I'll do my endeavour, Madam: You can have no more.

Mrs. Stric. Whence came you? How got you here?

Rang. Dear Madam, so long as I am here, what signifies how I got here, or whence I came? But, that I may satisfy your curiosity—First, as to your whence came you? I answer, out of the street: and, to your how got you here? I say, in at the window. It stood so invitingly open, it was irresistible. But, Madam—you was going to undress: I beg I may not incommode you.

Mrs. Stric. This is the most consummate piece of impudence!—

Rang. For heaven's sake, have one drop of pity for a poor young fellow who long has lov'd you.

Mrs. Stric. What would the fellow have?

Rang. Your husband's usage will excuse you to the world.

Mrs. Stric. I cannot bear this insolence. Help! help!

Rang. Oh, hold that clamorous tongue, Madam! speak one word more, and I am gone; positively gone.

Mrs. Stric. Gone! So I would have you.

Rang. Lord, Madam, you are so hasty!

Mrs. Stric. Shall I not speak, when a thief, a robber, breaks into my house at midnight? Help! help!

Rang. Ha! no one hears—Now, Cupid, assist me! Look ye, Madam, I never could make fine speeches, and cringe, and bow, and fawn, and flatter, and lie. I have said more to you already, than I ever said to a woman in such circumstances in all my life. But since I find you will yield to no persuasion to your good—I will gently force you to be grateful. [Throws down his hat, and seizes her.] Come, come! unbend that brow, and look more kindly on me!

Mrs. Stric. For shame, Sir—Thus on my knees let me beg for mercy. [Kneeling.

Rang. And thus, on mine, let me beg the same. [He kneels, catches, and kisses her.

Mr. Stric. [Within.] Take away her sword! she'll hurt herself!

Mrs. Stric. Oh, heavens! that is my husband's voice!

Rang. [Rising.] The devil it is!

Mr. Stric. [Within.] Take away her sword; I say; and then I can close with her.

Mrs. Stric. He is upon the stairs, now coming up. I am undone if he sees you.

Rang. Pox on him! I must decamp then; which way

Mrs. Stric. Thro' this passage into the next chamber

Rang. And so into the street. With all my heart

You may be perfectly easy, Madam. Mum's the word; I never blab. [Aside.]—I shall not leave so, but wait till the last moment. [Exit Ranger

Mrs. Stric. So, he is gone! What could I have said, if he had been discover'd!

Enter Mr. Strickland, driving in Jacintha, Lucet following.

Mr. Stric. Once more, my pretty masculine madam, you are welcome home. And I hope to keep you somewhat closer than I have done: for to-morrow morning, eight o'clock, is the latest hour you shall stay in this lewd town.

Jacin. Oh, Sir! when once a girl is equipp'd with a hearty resolution, it is not your warship's sagacity nor the great chain at your gate, can hinder her from doing what she has a mind.

Mr. Stric. Oh, Lord! Lord! How this love improves a young lady's modesty!

Jacin. Am I to blame to seek for happiness where, when you are resolved to make me miserable here?

Mr. Stric. I have this night prevented your making yourself so; and will endeavour to do it for the future. I have you safe now, and the devil shall get you out of my clutches again. I have locked the doors, and barr'd them, I warrant you. here—[Giving her a candle.] troop to your chamber, and to bed, whilst you are well. Go—treads on Ranger's hat.] What's here? a hat! man's hat in my wife's dressing-room!

[Looking at the

Mrs. Stric. [Aside.] What shall I do?

Mr. Stric. [Taking up the hat, and looking at Mr. Strickland] Ha, by hell! I see 'tis true.

Mrs. Stric. My tears confound me. I dare not tell the truth, and know not how to frame a lie!

Mr. Stric. Mrs. Strickland! Mrs. Strickland! How came this hat into your chamber?

Lucet. [Aside.] Are you that way disposed, fine lady, and will not trust me!

Mr. Stric. Speak, wretch, speak—

Jacin. I could not have suspected this, [

Mr. Stric. Why dost thou not speak?

Mrs. Stric. Sir—

Mr. Stric. Guilt---'tis guilt that ties your tongue

Lucet. I must bring her off, however---No chamber-maid can help it—

Mr. Stric. My fears are just, and I am misled

—Thou worst of women?

Mrs. Stric. I know my innocence, and cannot

this no longer.

Mr. Stric. I know you are false---and 'tis I who bear my injuries no longer. [Both walk about in a

Lucet. [To Jacintha aside.] Is not the hat your own it, madam. [Takes away Jacintha's hat, and

Mrs. Stric. What ground, what cause have you for jealousy, when you yourself can witness leaving me was accidental, your return unexpected and expected even sooner than it happen'd? abuse is gross and palpable.

Mr. Stric. Why, this is true!

Mrs. Stric. Indeed, Jacintha! I am innocent

Mr. Stric. And yet this hat must belong to her body.

Jacin. Dear Mrs. Strickland, be not concerned. When he has diverted himself a little longer with

Mr. Stric. Ha!

Jacin. I suppose he will give me my hat again



Mr. Strick. Your hat?

Jacin. Yes, my hat. You brush'd it from my side myself, and then trod upon it; whether on purpose to abuse this lady, or no, you best know yourself.

Mr. Stric. It cannot be—'tis all a lie.

Jacin. Believe so still—with all my heart—But the hat is mine. [Snatches it, and puts it on.]

Mr. Stric. Why did she look so?

Jacin. Your violence of temper is too much for her. You use her ill, and then suspect her for that confusion which you yourself occasion.

Mr. Stric. Why did not you set me right at first?

Jacin. Your hard usage of me, Sir, is a sufficient reason why I should not be much concern'd to undeceive you at all. 'Tis for your lady's sake I do it now; who deserves much better of you than to be thus expos'd for every slight suspicion. See where she sits—Go to her.

Mrs. Stric. [Raising.] Indeed, Mr. Strickland, I have a foul as much above—

Mr. Stric. Whew! now you have both found your tongues, and I must bear their eternal rattle!

Jacin. For shame, Sir, go to her, and—

Mr. Stric. Well, well, what shall I say? I forgive, all is over. I, I, I forgive!

Mrs. Stric. Forgive! What do you mean?

Jacin. Forgive her! is that all? Consider, Sir—

Mr. Stric. Hold—hold your confounded tongues, and I'll do any thing. I'll ask pardon—or forgive—for any thing. Good now, be quiet—I ask your pardon—there—[kisses her.] For you, Madam—I am infinitely oblig'd to you, and I cou'd find in my heart to make you a return in kind, by marrying you to a beggar—but I have more conscience. Come, come, to your chamber—Here, take this candle—

Enter Lucetta, pertly.

Lucet. Sir, if you please, I will light my young lady to bed.

Mr. Stric. No, no! no such thing, good Madam. She shall have nothing but her pillow to consult this night, I assure you—So, in, in. [The ladies take leave.] [Exit Jacintha.] Good night, kind Madam.

Lucet. Pox of the jealous fool! We might both have escap'd out of the window purely. [Aside.]

Mr. Stric. Go, get you down; and, do you hear? order the coach to be ready in the morning at eight exactly. [Exit Lucetta.] So, she is safe till to-morrow, and then for the country; and when she is there, I can manage as I think fit.

Mrs. Stric. Dear Mr. Strickland—

Mr. Stric. I am not in a humour, Mrs. Strickland, to talk with you—Go to bed—I will endeavour to get the better of my temper, if I can—I'll follow you. [Exit Mrs. Strickland.] How despicable have I made myself! [Exit.]

SCENE III. Another Chamber.

Enter Ranger.

Rang. All seems hush'd again, and I may venture out. I may as well sneak off whilst I am in a whole skin. And shall so much love and claret as I am in possession of, only lull me to sleep, when it might so much better keep me waking? Forbid it, fortune; and forbid it, love. This is a chamber, perhaps of some bewitching female, and I may yet be happy. Ha! a light! The door opens. A boy! pox on him. [He retires.]

Enter Jacintha, with a Candle.

Jacin. I have been listening at the door; and from their silence, I conclude they are peaceably gone to bed together.

Rang. [Aside.] A pretty boy, faith! He seems uneasy.

Jacin. [Sitting down.] What an unlucky night

has this proved to me! Every circumstance has fallen out unhappily.

Rang. He talks aloud. I'll listen. [Aside.]

Jacin. But what most amazes me is, that Clarinda should betray me!

Rang. Clarinda? she must be a woman! well, what of her? [Aside.]

Jacin. My guardian else would never have suspected my disguise.

Rang. [Aside.] Disguise! Ha, it must be so. What eyes she has? What a dull rogue was I not to suspect this sooner?

Jacin. Ha, I had forgot—the ladder is at the window still, and I will boldly venture by myself. [Rising briskly, sees Ranger] Ha! a man, and well dress'd! Ha, Mrs. Strickland, are you then at last dishonest!

Rang. [Aside.] By all my wishes she is a charming woman! Lucky rascal!

Jacin. But I will, if possible, conceal her shame, and be brunt of his impertinence.

Rang. What shall I say to her? No matter! any thing soft will do the business. [Aside.]

Jacin. Who are you?

Rang. A man, young gentleman.

Jacin. And what would you have?

Rang. A woman.

Jacin. You are very free, Sir. Here are none for you.

Rang. Ay, but there is one, and a fair one too; the most charming creature nature ever set her hand to; and you are the dear little pilot that must direct me to her heart.

Jacin. What mean you, Sir? It is an office I am not accustomed to.

Rang. You won't have far to go, however. I never make my errands tedious. It is to your own heart, dear madam, I would have you whisper in my behalf. Nay, never start. Think you such beauty could ever be conceal'd from eyes so well acquainted with it's charms?

Jacin. What will become of me! If I cry out Mrs. Strickland is undone. This is my last resort. [Aside.]

Rang. Pardon, dear lady, the boldness of this visit, which your guardian's care has forc'd me to—But I long have lov'd you, long doated on that beautiful face, and followed you from place to place, though, perhaps, unknown and unregarded.

Jacin. Here's a special fellow. [Aside.]

Rang. Turn then an eye of pity on my sufferings; and by heaven—one tender look from those piercing eyes, one touch of this soft hand—

[Going to take her hand.]

Jacin. Hold, Sir—no nearer.

Rang. Would more than repay whole years of pain.

Jacin. Hear me. But keep your distance, or I raise the family—

Rang. Blessings on her tongue, only for prattling to me. [Aside.]

Jacin. Oh, for a moment's courage, and I shall shame him from his purpose. [Aside.] If I were certain so much gallantry had been shown on my account only—

Rang. You wrong your beauty to think that any other could have power to draw me hither. By all the little loves that play about your lips, I swear—

Jacin. You came to me, and me alone?

Rang. By all the thousand graces that inhabit there, you, and only you, have drawn me hither.

Jacin. Well said.

Rang. By heaven she comes! ah, honest Ranger, I never knew thee fail!— [Aside.]

Jacin. Pray, Sir, where did you leave this hat?

Rang. That hat!—that hat—'Tis my hat—I dropt it in the next chamber as I was looking for yours.



Jacin. How mean and despicable do you look now?

Rang. So, so! I am in a pretty pickle! [Aside.]

Jacin. You know by this, that I am acquainted with every thing that has passed within: and how ill it agrees with what you have professed to me—Let me advise you, Sir, to be gone immediately. Through that window you may easily get into the street—One scream of mine, the least noise at that door, will wake the house.

Rang. Say you so? [Aside.]

Jacin. Believe me, Sir, an injur'd husband is not so easily pleas'd, and a suspected wife that is jealous of her honour—

Rang. Is the devil, and so let's have no more of her. Look ye, Madam, [Getting between the door and her.] I have but one argument left, and that is a strong one: Look on me well, I am as handsome, a strong, well made fellow, as any about town, and since we are alone, as I take it, we can have no occasion to be more private. [Going to lay hold of her.]

Jacin. I have a reputation, Sir, and will maintain it.

Rang. You have a bewitching pair of eyes.

Jacin. Consider my virtue. [Struggling.]

Rang. Consider your beauty and my desires.

Jacin. If I were a man, you dar'd not use me thus.

Rang. I should not have the same temptation.

Jacin. Hear, me Sir, I will be heard. [Breaks from him.] There is a man who will make you repent this usage of me—Oh, Bellamy! where art thou now?

Rang. Bellamy?

Jacin. Were he here, you durst not thus affront me.

Rang. His mistress, on my soul! [Bursting out a crying.] You can love, madam; you can love, I find. Her tears affect me strangely. [Aside.]

Jacin. I am not ashamed to own my passion for a man of virtue and honour—I love, and glory in it.

Rang. Oh, brave! and you can write letters, you can. I will not trust myself home with you this evening, because I know it is inconvenient.

Jacin. Ha!

Rang. Therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging; 'tis no matter how far off my guardian's. Yours, Jacintha.

Jacin. The very words of my letter. I am amazed. Do you know Mr. Bellamy?

Rang. There is not a man on earth I have so great a value for: And he must have some value for me too, or he would never have shewn me your pretty epistle. Think of that, fair lady. The ladder is at the window: and so, Madam, I hope delivering you safe into his arms will, in some measure, expiate the crime I have been guilty of to you.

Jacin. Good heaven, how fortunate is this!

Rang. I believe I make myself appear more wicked than I really am. For, damn me, if I do not feel more satisfaction in the thoughts of restoring you to my friend, than I could have pleasure in any favour your bounty could have bestow'd.

Jacin. Your generosity transports me.

Rang. Let us lose no time then, the ladder's ready. Where was you to lodge?

Jacin. At Mr. Meggot's.

Rang. At my friend Jacky's? better and better still.

Jacin. Are you acquainted with him too?

Rang. Ay, ay! Why did not I tell you at first that I was one of your old acquaintance? I know all about you, you see; though the devil fetch me if ever I saw you before. Now, Madam—

Jacin. And now, Sir—Have with you.

Rang. Then thou art a girl of spirit. And though I long to hug you for trusting yourself with me, I

will not beg a single kiss, till Bellamy himself give me leave. He must fight well that takes from me. [Exit.]

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Piazza.

Enter Bellamy and Frankly.

Bella. PISHA! What impertinent devil put it in your head to meddle with my affairs?

Frank. You know I went thither in pursuit another.

Bella. I know nothing you had to do there at

Frank. I thought, Mr. Bellamy, you were a

Bella. I am so; and therefore should be forgive this sudden warmth.

Frank. And therefore should forgive the fond pertinence of a lover.

Bella. Jealousy, you know, is as natural an incident to love—

Frank. As curiosity. By one piece of silly curiosity I have gone nigh to ruin both myself and you. Let not, then, your jealousy complete our mistakes. I fear I have lost a mistress as well as you. Then let us not quarrel. All may come right again.

Bella. It is impossible. She is gone, removed ever from my sight. She is in the country by this time.

Frank. How did you lose her after we parted?

Bella. By too great confidence. When I got to my chair, the chairmen were not to be found. And safe, as I thought, in our disguise, I actually put her into the chair, when Mr. Strickland and his servants were in sight; which I had no sooner done than they surrounded us, overpower'd me, and carry'd her away.

Frank. Unfortunate indeed! Could you not make a second attempt!

Bella. I had design'd it. But when I came to the door I found the ladder remov'd: and hearing noise, seeing no lights, nor being able to make anybody answer, I concluded all attempts as impracticable as I now find them. Ha! I see Lucetta coming. Then they may be still in town.

Enter Lucetta.

Lucetta, welcome! What news of Jacintha?

Lucet. News, Sir! You fright me out of my senses! Why, is she not with you?

Bella. What do you mean? With me? I have not seen her since I lost her last night.

Lucet. Good heav'n? then she is undone for ever.

Frank. Why, what's the matter?

Bella. Speak out—I'm all amazement.

Lucet. She is escap'd without any of us knowing how. No-body mist her till morning. We thought she went away with you. But heaven knows now what may have happen'd.

Bella. Somebody must have accompanied her in her flight.

Lucet. We know of no-body. We are all in confusion at home. My master swears revenge on you. My mistress says a stranger has her.

Bella. A stranger?

Lucet. But Mrs. Clarinda—

Bella. Clarinda! Who is she?

Lucet. [To Frankly.] The lady, Sir, you saw in our house last night.

Frank. Ha! what of her?

Lucet. She says, she is sure one Frankly is the man. She saw them together, and knows it to be true.

Frank. Damn'd fortune!



Lucet. Sure this is not Mr. Frankly.

Frank. Nothing will convince him now. [*Aside.*]

Bella. [*Looking at Frankly.*] Ha! 'tis truth—I see it is true. [*Aside.*] Lucetta, run up to Buckle, and take him with you to search wherever you can. [*Pushes her out.*] Now, Mr. Frankly, I have found you—You have used me so ill, that you force me to forget you are my friend.

Frank. What do you mean?

Bella. Draw.

Frank. Are you mad? By Heavens, I am innocent.

Bella. I have heard you, and will no longer be impos'd on—Defend yourself.

Frank. Nay, if you are so hot, I draw to defend myself, as I would against a madman.

*Enter Ranger.*

Rang. What the devil, swords at noon-day? I have among you, faith! [*Parts them.*] What's here, Bellamy?—Yes, gad, you are Bellamy; and you are Frankly. Put up, put up both of you—or else—I am a devilish fellow when once my sword is out.

Bella. We shall have a time——

Rang. [*Pushing Bellamy one way.*] A time for what?

Frank. I shall be always as ready to defend my innocence as now.

Rang. [*Pushing Frankly the other way.*] Innocence! ay, to be sure—at your age——A mighty innocent fellow, no doubt. But what in the name of common sense is it that ails you both? Are you mad? The last time I saw you, you were hugging and kissing; and now you are cutting one another's throats—I never knew any good come of one fellow's bellav'ring another—But I shall put you into better humour, I warrant you——Bellamy, Frankly, listen both of you——Such fortune——Such a scheme——

Bella. Pr'ythee leave fooling. What, art drunk?

Frank. He is always so, I think.

Rang. And who gave you the privilege of thinking? Drunk? no! I am not drunk—Tipsey, perhaps, with my good fortune—merry, and in spirits:—though I have not fire enough to run my friend through the body. Not drunk, though Jack Meggot and I have box'd it about——Champaign was the word for two whole hours by the Shrewsbury clock.

Bella. Jack Meggot!—Why, I left him at one, going to bed.

Rang. That may be, but I made a shift to rouse him and his family by four this morning. Ounds! I pick'd up a wench, and carried her to his house.

Bella. Ha!

Rang. Such a variety of adventures---Nay, you shall hear——But before I begin, Bellamy, you shall promise me half a dozen kisses before-hand: for the devil fetch me if that little jade, Jacintha, would give me one, though I pressed hard.

Bella. Who, Jacintha? Press to kiss Jacintha?

Rang. Kiss her! Ay! why not? Is she not a woman, and made to be kiss'd?

Bella. Kiss her—I shall run distracted!

Rang. How could I help it, when I had her alone, you rogue, in her bed-chamber, at midnight! I had been to be sacrific'd, I should have done it.

Bella. Bed-chamber, at midnight! I can hold no longer——Draw.

Frank. Be easy, Bellamy.

[*Interposing.*]

Bella. He has been at some of his damn'd tricks with her.

Frank. Hear him out.

Rang. 'Sdeath, how could I know she was his mistress? But I tell this story most miserably, I

should have told you first, I was in another lady's chamber. By the Lord, I got in at the window by a ladder of ropes.

Frank. Ha! another Lady?

Rang. Another: and stole in upon her whilst she was undressing; beautiful as an angel, blooming and young——

Frank. What, in the same house?

Bella. What is this to Jacintha? Ease me of my pain.

Rang. Ay, ay, in the same house, on the same floor. The sweetest, little angel—But I design to have another touch with her.

Frank. 'Sdeath! but you shall have a touch upon me first.

Bella. Stay, Frankly.

[*Interposing.*]

Rang. Why, what strange madness has possess'd you both, that nobody must kiss a pretty wench but yourselves?

Bella. What became of Jacintha?

Rang. Ounds! what have you done, that you must monopolize kissing!

Frank. Pr'ythee, honest Ranger, ease me of the pain I am in. Was her name Clarinda?

Bella. Speak in plain words, where Jacintha is, where to be found——Dear boy, tell me.

Rang. Ay, now it is honest Ranger: and dear boy, tell me—and a minute ago, my throat was to be cut—I could find in my heart not to open my lips. But here comes Jack Meggot, who will let you into all the secret, though he design'd to keep it from you, in half the time that I can, though I had ever so great a mind to tell it you.

*Enter Jack Meggot.*

Jack Meg. So, save ye, save ye, lads! We have been frighten'd out of our wits for you: not hearing of Mr. Bellamy, poor Jacintha is ready to sink for fear of any accident.

Bella. Is she at your house?

Jack Meg. Why, did you not know that? We dispatch'd Master Ranger to you three hours ago.

Rang. Ay, plague! but I had business of my own, so I could not come——Hark ye, Frankly, is your girl maid, wife, or widow?

Frank. A maid, I hope.

Rang. The odds are against you, Charles——But mine is married, you rogue, and her husband jealous——The devil is in it, if I do not reap some reward for my last night's service.

Bella. He has certainly been at Mrs. Strickland herself. But, Frankly, I dare not look on you.

Frank. This one embrace cancels all thoughts of enmity.

Bella. Thou gen'rous man!—But I must haste to ease Jacintha of her fears.

Frank. And I to make up matters with Clarinda.

[*Exit.*]

Rang. And I to some kind wench, or other, Jack; but where I shall find her, Heaven knows: And so, my service to your monkey.

Jack Meg. Adieu, Rattlepate.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. The Hall of Mr. Strickland's House.

*Enter Mrs. Strickland and Clarinda.*

Mrs. Stric. But, why in such a hurry, my dear? Stay till your servants can go along with you.

Clar. Oh, no matter! they'll follow with my things. It is but a little way off, and my chair will guard me. After my staying out so late last night, I am sure Mr. Strickland will think every minute an age whilst I am in his house.

Mrs. Stric. I am as much amaz'd at his suspecting your innocence as my own; and every time I think of it, I blush at my present behaviour to you.



Clar. No ceremony, dear child.

Mrs. Stric. No, Clarinda, I am too well acquainted with your good-humour. But I fear, in the eye of a malicious world, it may look like a confirmation of his suspicion.

Clar. My dear, if the world will speak ill of me, for the little innocent gaiety which I think the peculiar happiness of my temper, I know no way to prevent it; and am only sorry the world is so ill-natur'd; but I shall not part with my mirth, I assure them, so long as I know it innocent. I wish, my dear, this may be the greatest uneasiness your husband's jealousy ever gives you.

Mrs. Stric. I hope he never, again, may have such occasion as he had last night.

Clar. You are so unfashionable a wife:—Why, last night's accident would have made half the wives in London easy for life. Has not his jealousy discover'd itself openly? And are not you innocent? There is nothing but your foolish temper that prevents his being absolutely in your power.

Mrs. Stric. Clarinda, this is too serious an affair to laugh at. Let me advise you, take care of Mr. Frankly, observe his temper well; and if he has the least taint of jealousy, cast him off, and never trust to keeping him in your power.

Clar. You will hear little more of Frankly, I believe. Here is Mr. Strickland.

Enter Mr. Strickland and Lucetta.

Mr. Stric. Lucetta says you want me, Madam.

Clar. I trouble you, Sir, only that I might return you thanks for the civilities I have received in your family, before I took my leave.

Mr. Stric. Keep them to yourself, dear Madam. As it is at my request that you leave my house, your thanks upon that occasion are not very desirable.

Clar. Oh, Sir, you need not fear. My thanks were only for your civilities. They will not overburden you. But I'll conform to your humour, Sir, and part with as little ceremony—

Mr. Stric. As we met.

Clar. The brute! [*Aside.*] My dear, good b'ye, we may meet again. [*To Mrs. Strickland.*]

Mr. Stric. If you dare trust me with your hand.

Clar. Lucetta, remember my instructions. Now, Sir, have with you. [*Mr. Strickland leads Clarinda out.*]

Mrs. Stric. Are her instructions cruel or kind, Lucetta? for I suppose they relate to Mr. Frankly.

Lucet. Have you a mind to try, if I can keep a secret as well as yourself, Madam? But I will shew you I am fit to be trusted, by keeping this, though it signifies nothing.

Mrs. Stric. This answer is not so civil, I think.

Lucet. I beg pardon, Madam; I meant it not to offend.

Mrs. Stric. Pray let us have no more such. I neither desire, nor want your assistance.

Re-enter Mr. Strickland.

Mr. Stric. She is gone, I feel myself somewhat easier already. Since I have began this day with gallantry, Madam, shall I conduct you up?

Mrs. Stric. There is something, Sir, which gives you secret uneasiness. I wish—

Mr. Stric. Perhaps so, Madam, and perhaps it may soon be no secret at all. [*Leads her out.*]

Lucet. Would I were once well settled with my young lady; for at present, this is but an odd sort of a queer family. Last night's affair puzzles me. A hat there was that belong'd to none of us, that's certain. Madam was in a fright, that is as certain; and I brought all off. Jacintha escap'd, no one of us knows how. The good man's jealousy was yesterday groundless; yet to-day, in my mind, he

very much in the right. Mighty odd, all this! Somebody knocks. If this should be Clarinda's spark, I have an odd message for him too.

[*She opens the door.*]

Enter Frankly.

Frank. So, my pretty handmaid! Meeting with you gives me some hopes. May I speak with Clarinda?

Lucet. Whom do you want, Sir?

Frank. Clarinda, child. The young lady I was admitted to yesterday.

Lucet. Clarinda?—No such person lives here, I assure you.

Frank. Where then?

Lucet. I don't know, indeed, Sir.

Frank. Will you enquire within?

Lucet. Nobody knows in this house, Sir, you will find.

Frank. What do you mean? She is a friend of Jacintha's, your lady. I will take my oath she was here last night; and you yourself spoke of her being here, this morning—Not know!

Lucet. No. None of us know. She went away of a sudden—no one of us can imagine whither.

Frank. Why, faith, child, thou hast a tolerable face, and hast deliver'd this denial very handsomely. But, let me tell you, your impertinence this morning had lik'd to have cost me my life: Now, therefore, make me amends. I come from your young mistress; I come from Mr. Bellamy; I come with my purse full of gold, (that persuasive rhetoric) to win you to let me see and speak to this Clarinda once again.

Lucet. She is not here, Sir.

Frank. Direct me to her.

Lucet. No, I can't do that neither.

Enter Mr. Strickland behind.

Mr. Stric. I have heard a knocking at the door, and a man's voice—Ha! [*Aside.*]

Frank. Deliver this letter to her.

Mr. Stric. By all my fears, a letter! [*Aside.*]

Lucet. I don't know but I may be tempted to do that.

Frank. Take it then—and with it this.

[*Kisses her, and gives her money.*]

Mr. Stric. Um! there are two bribes in a breath! What a jade she is! [*Aside.*]

Lucet. Ay---this gentleman understands reason.

Frank. And be assured you oblige your mistress while you are serving me.

Mr. Stric. Her mistress!--Damn'd sex! and damn'd wife, thou art an epitome of that sex! [*Aside.*]

Frank. And if you can procure me an answer, your fee shall be enlarg'd. [*Exit Frankly.*]

Lucet. The next step is to get her to read this letter.

Mr. Stric. [*Snatches the letter.*] No noise----but stand silent there, whilst I read this.

[*Breaks it open, and drops the case.*]

Madam, The gaiety of a heart happy as mine was yesterday, may, I hope, easily excuse the unseasonable visit I made your house last night---Death and the devil, confusion! I shall run distracted. It is too much! There was a man, then, to whom the hat belong'd: and I was gull'd, abus'd, cheated, impos'd on, by a chit, a girl---Oh, woman! woman. But I will be calm, search it coolly to the bottom, and have a full revenge—

Lucet. [*Aside.*] So, here's fine work! He'll make himself very ridiculous though.

Mr. Stric. [*Reads on.*] I know my innocence will appear so manifestly, that I need only appeal to the lady who accompanied you at Barb---Your very humble servant, good, innocent, fine Madam Clarinda---And I

her good-nature---(But I'll not say so.)



will not let you persist in injuring your obedient humble servant.

Charles Frankly.

Now, who can say my jealousy lack'd foundation, or my suspicion of fine madam's innocent gaiety was unjust? Gaiety! why ay! 'twas gaiety brought him hither. Gaiety makes her a bawd—My wife may be a whore in gaiety. What a number of sins become fashionable, under the notion of gaiety!—What! you receiv'd this epistle in gaiety too? and were to deliver it to my wife, I suppose, when the gay fit came next upon her?—Why! you impudent young trumpet, do you laugh at me?

Lucet. I wou'd, if I dar'd, and heartily.——Be pleas'd, Sir, only to look at that piece of paper that lies there.

Mr. Stric. Ha!

Lucet. I have not touch'd it, Sir. It is the case that letter came in, and the direction will inform you whom I was to deliver it to.

Mr. Stric. This is directed to Clarinda!

Lucet. Oh, is it so! Now read it over again, and all your foolish doubts will vanish.

Mr. Stric. I have no doubts at all. I am satisfied that you, Jacintha, Clarinda, my wife, all are—

Lucet. Lud! lud! you will make a body mad.

Mr. Stric. Hold your impertinent tongue.

Lucet. You'll find the thing to be just as I say, Sir.

Mr. Stric. Be gone. [Exit Lucetta.] They must be poor at the work, indeed, if they did not lend me another their names. 'Tis plain, 'tis evident. And I am miserable. But for my wife, she shall not stay one night longer in my house. Separation, shame, contempt, shall be her portion. I am determin'd in the thing; and when once it is over, I may perhaps be easy. [Exit.

SCENE III. The Street.

Clarinda brought in a chair; Ranger following.

Rang. Hark ye, chairmen? Damn your con-founded trot. Go slower.

Clar. Here, stop.

Rang. By Heavens! the monsters hear reason, and obey.

Clar. [Letting down the window.] What trouble-some fellow was that?

1 Chairm. Some rake, I warrant, that cannot carry himself home, and wants us to do it for him.

Clar. There—And pray do you take care I be not troubled with him. [Goes in.

Rang. That's as much as to say now, Pray follow me. Madam, you are a charming woman, and I will do it—

1 Chairm. Stand off, Sir.

Rang. Pr'ythee, honest fellow—what—what writing is that? [Endeavouring to get in.

2 Chairm. You come not here!

Rang. Lodgings to be let! a pretty convenient inscription, and the sign of a good modest family! There may be lodgings for gentlemen as well as ladies. Hark ye, rogues! I'll lay you all the silver I have in my pocket, there it is, I get in there in spite of your teeth, ye pimps.

[Throws down the money, and goes in.

1 Chairm. What, have you let the gentleman in?

2 Chairm. I'll tell you what, partner, he certainly kept by whilst we were picking up the money. Come, take up. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV. Clarinda's Lodgings.

A Noise within between Ranger and Landlady.

Clarinda enters laughing, a Maid following.

Clar. My madcap cousin Ranger, as I live. I am sure he does not know me!—If I could but hide my face now, what sport I should have! A mask, a mask! run and see if you can find a mask.

Maid. I believe there is one above,

Clar. Run, run, and fetch it.

[Exit Maid.

Here he comes! [Enter Ranger and Landlady. How unlucky this is. [Turning from 'em.

Landl. What's your business here, unmannerly Sir?

Rang. Well, let's see these lodgings that are to be let—Gad, a very pretty neat tenement—But hark ye; is it real and natural, all that, or only patch'd up and new-painted this summer-season, against the town fills?

Landl. What does the saucy fellow mean with his double tendres here? Get you down—

Enter Maid with a Mask.

Maid. Here is a very dirty one. [Aside to Clarinda.

Clar. No matter—now we shall see a little what he wou'd be at. [Aside.

Landl. This is an honest house—For all your lac'd waistcoat, I'll have you thrown down neck and heels.

Rang. Pho! not in such a hurry, good old lady.—A mask!—Nay, with all my heart. It saves a world of blushing—Have you ne'er a one for me?—I am apt to be asham'd, myself, on these occasions.

Landl. Get you down, I say—

Rang. Not if I guess right, old lady. Madam! [To Clarinda, who makes signs to the Landlady to retire.]

Look ye there now! that a woman shou'd live to your age, and know so little of the matter. Be gone. [Exit Landlady.] By her forwardness this should be a whore of quality. My boy, Ranger, thou art in

luck to-day.—She won't speak, I find—then I will. [Aside.] Delicate lodgings, truly, madam; and very

neatly furnish'd—A very convenient room this, I must needs own, to entertain a mix'd company. But, my dear charming creature, does not that door open to a more commodious apartment for the happiness of a private friend, or so? The prettiest brags lock.

—Fast, um! that won't do. 'Sdeath, you are a beautiful woman; I am sure you are. Pr'ythee let me see your face. It is your interest, child.—The longer you delay, the more I shall expect; therefore, [Taking her hand] my dear, soft, kind, new acquaintance, thus let me take your hand; and, whilst you gently with the other let day-light in upon me, let me softly hold you to me, that, with my longing lips, I may receive the warmest, best impression. [She unmasks.] Clarinda!

Clar. Ha, ha! Your servant, cousin Ranger—Ha, ha, ha!

Rang. Oh, your humble servant, madam! you had like to have been beholden to your mask, cousin!—I must brazen it out. [Aside.

Clar. Ha, ha, ha! You were not so happy in your disguise, Sir. The pretty stagger in your gait, that happy disposition of your wig, the genteel negligence of your whole person, and those pretty flowers of modish gallantry, made it impossible to mistake you, my sweet coz. Ha, ha!

Rang. Oh, I knew you too, but I fancied you had taken a particular liking to my person, and had a mind to sink the relation under that little piece of black velvet! And, egad, you never find me behind-hand in a frolic. But, since it is otherwise, my merry, good-humour'd cousin, I am as heartily glad to see you in town, as I should be to meet any of my old bottle acquaintance.

Clar. And, on my side, I am as happy in meeting your worship, as I should be in a rencounter with e'er a petticoat in Christendom.

Rang. And if you have any occasion for a dangle-gallant to Vauxhall, Ranelagh, or even the poor neglected Park, you are so unlike the rest of your virtuous sisters of the petticoat, that I will venture myself with you.

Clar. Take care what you promise; for who knows



but this face you were pleas'd to say so many pretty things of before you saw it, may rise so many rivals among your kept mistresses, and reps of quality—

*Rang.* Hold, hold! a truce with your satire, sweet cuz; or, if scandal must be the topic of every virtuous woman's conversation—call for your tea-water, and let it be in its proper element. Come, your tea; your tea.

*Enter Landlady.*

*Clar.* With all my heart—Who's there? get tea. Upon condition that you stay till it comes.

*Rang.* That is according as you behave, Madam.

*Clar.* Oh, Sir, I am very sensible of the favour!

*Rang.* Nay, you may, I assure you; for there is but one woman of virtue, besides yourself, I would stay with ten minutes, (and I have not known her above these twelve hours.) The insipidity, or the rancour of their discourse, is insufferable. 'Sdeath! I had rather take the air with my grandmother.

*Clar.* Ha, ha, ha! the ladies are highly oblig'd to you, I vow.

*Rang.* I tell you what: The lady I speak of was oblig'd to me, and the generous girl is ready to own it.

*Clar.* And pray, when was it you did virtue this considerable service?

*Rang.* But this last night, the devil fetch me! a romantic whim of mine convey'd me into her chamber, where I found her, young and beautiful, alone, at midnight, dress'd like a soft Adonis, her lovely hair all loose about her shoulders—

*Clar.* In boy's clothes! [This is worth attending to. *Aside.*

*Rang.* Gad, I no more suspected her being a woman, than I did your being my cater-cousin.

*Clar.* How did you discover it at last?

*Rang.* Why, faith, she very modestly dropt me a hint of it herself.

*Clar.* Herself! [If this should be Jacintha. *Aside.*

*Rang.* Ay, 'foregad, did she! which I imagin'd a good sign, at midnight. Ha, cousin! So I e'en invented a long story of a passion I had for her, (tho' I had never seen her before)---you know my old way;---and said so many such tender things—

*Clar.* As you said to me just now.

*Rang.* Psha! quite in another file, I assure you. It was midnight, and I was in a right cue.

*Clar.* Well! And what did she answer to all these protestations?

*Rang.* Why, instead of running into my arms at once, as I expected—

*Clar.* To be sure.

*Rang.* 'Gad, like a free-hearted honest girl, she frankly told me, she lik'd another better than she lik'd me; that I had something in my face that shew'd I was a gentleman; and she would e'en trust herself with me, if I would give her my word I would convey her to her spark.

*Clar.* Oh, brave! And how did you bear this?

*Rang.* Why, curse me, if I am ever angry with a woman for not having a passion for me; I only hate your sex's vain pretence of having no passion at all. Gad! I lov'd the good-natur'd girl for it; took her at her word; stole her out of the window; and this morning made a very honest fellow happy in the possession of her.

*Clar.* And her name is Jacintha.

*Rang.* Ha!

*Clar.* Your amours are no secrets, Sir. You see you might as well have told me all the whole of last night's adventure; for you find I know.

*Rang.* All! Why, what do you know?

*Clar.* Nay, nothing. I only know that a gentleman's hat cannot be dropt in a lady's chamber—

*Rang.* The devil!

*Clar.* But a husband is such an odd, impertinent, awkward creature, that he will be stumbling over it.

*Rang.* Here has been fine work. [*Aside.*] But how in the name of wonder, should you know all this?

*Clar.* By being in the same house.

*Rang.* In the same house?

*Clar.* Ay, in the same house. A witness of the confusion you have made.

*Rang.* Frankly's Clarinda, by all that's fortunate. It must be so. [*Aside.*

*Clar.* And let me tell you, Sir, that even the dull, low-spirited diversions you ridicule in us tame creatures, are preferable to the romantic exploits that only wine can raise you to.

*Rang.* Yes, cousin! But I'll be even with you. [*Aside.*

*Clar.* If you reflect, cousin, you will find a great deal of wit in shocking a lady's modesty, disturbing her quiet, tainting her reputation, and ruining the peace of a whole family.

*Rang.* To be sure.

*Clar.* These are the high-mettled pleasures of you men of spirit, that the insipidity of the virtuous can never arrive at. And can you in reality think your Bungundy, and your Bacchus, your Venus, and your Loves, an excuse for all this? Fy, cousin, fy!

*Rang.* No, cousin.

*Clar.* What, dumb? I am glad you have modesty enough left not to go about to excuse yourself.

*Rang.* It is as you say. When we are sober, and reflect but ever so little on the follies we commit, we are ashamed and sorry; and yet the very next minute we run again into the very same absurdities.

*Clar.* What! moralizing, cousin? ha, ha, ha!

*Rang.* What you know is not half, nor a hundredth part of the mischief of my last night's frolic. And yet, the very next petticoat I saw this morning, I must follow it, and be damn'd to me: Though, for aught I know, poor Frankly's life may depend upon it.

*Clar.* Whose life, Sir?

*Rang.* And here do I stand prating to you now.

*Clar.* Pray, good cousin, explain yourself.

*Rang.* Good cousin! She has it. [*Aside.*] Why whilst I was making off with the wench, Bellamy and he were quarrelling about her: and though Jacintha and I made all the haste we could, we did not get to them before—

*Clar.* Before what? (I'm frighten'd out of my wits.

*Rang.* Not that Frankly car'd three halfpence for the girl.

*Clar.* But there was no mischief done, I hope.

*Rang.* Pho! a slight scratch. Nothing at all, as the surgeon said: though he was but a queer-looking son of a bitch of a surgeon neither.

*Clar.* Good God! Why, he should have the best that can be found in London.

*Rang.* Ay, indeed, so he should. That was what was going for, when I saw you. [*Sits down.*] They are all at Jack Meggot's hard by, and you will keep me here.

*Clar.* I keep you here! For Heav'n's sake be gone.

*Rang.* Your tea is a damn'd while a coming.

*Clar.* You shall have no tea now, I assure you.

*Rang.* Nay! One dish.

*Clar.* No, positively, you shall not stay.

*Rang.* Your commands are absolute, madam. [*Going.*

*Clar.* Then Frankly is true, and I only am to blame.

*Rang.* [*Returns.*] But I beg ten thousand pardons, cousin, that I should forget to salute you.

*Clar.* Psha! How can you trifle at such a time as this?

*Rang.* A trifle! Wrong not your beauty.



ar. Lord! How teizing you are? There.  
ang. [Kisses her.] Poor thing! How uneasy she is!  
no ceremony. You shall not stir a step with me.  
ar. I do not intend it. This is downright pro-  
ing. [Exit Ranger.] Who's there?

Enter Landlady.

andl. Madam, did your ladyship call?  
ar. Does one Mr. Meggot live in this neighbour-  
d?

andl. Yes, Madam, a fine gentleman, and keeps  
oble house, and a world of company.

lar. Very well: I don't want his history. I  
nder my servants are not come yet.

Landl. Lack-a-day, Madam, they are all below.

lar. Send up one then with a card to me. I must  
ow the truth of this affair immediately. [Exeunt.]

## ACT V. SCENE I.

Room in Mr. Strickland's House. Mr. and Mrs.  
Strickland discovered; she weeping, and he writing at  
a Table.

Mrs. Strickland.

EIGH! ho!

Mr. Stric. What can possibly be the occasion  
that sigh, madam? You have yourself agreed to  
maintenance, and a maintenance no duchess need  
asham'd of.

Mrs. Stric. But the extremities of provocation  
at drove me to that agreement—

Mr. Stric. Were the effects of your own follies.  
Why do you disturb me? [Writes on.]

Mrs. Stric. I would not willingly give you a mo-  
ment's uneasiness. I but desire a fair and equal hear-  
ing: and if I satisfy you not in ev'ry point, then  
andon me, discard me, to the world and it's mali-  
cious tongues.

Mr. Stric. What was it you said?—Damn this pen.

Mrs. Stric. I say, Mr. Strickland, I would only—

Mr. Stric. You would only!—You would only  
peat what you have been saying this hour, *I am in-  
nocent*; and when I shew'd you the letter I had taken  
om your maid, what was then your poor evasion,  
ut that it was to Clarinda, and you were innocent!

Mrs. Stric. Heaven knows I am innocent.

Mr. Stric. But I know your Clarinda, your wo-  
man of honour, is your blind, your cover, your—  
but why do I distract myself about a woman I have  
o longer any concerns with. Here, Madam, is your  
ate. A letter to your brother in the country.

Mrs. Stric. Sir—

Mr. Stric. I have told him what a sister he is to  
ceive, and how to bid her welcome.

Mrs. Stric. Then my ruin is compleat. My bro-  
ther!

Mr. Stric. I must vindicate my own honour, else  
what will the world say?

Mrs. Stric. That brother was my only hope, my  
only ground of patience. In his retirement I hoped  
my name might have been safe, and slept, till by  
ome happy means you might at length have known  
me innocent, and pitied me.

Mr. Stric. Retirement! pretty soul! No! No!  
That face was never made for retirement. It is  
another sort of retiring you are fittest for—Ha!  
Hark! what's that? [A knocking at the door.] Two  
gentle taps—And why but two! Was that the sig-  
nal, Madam? Stir not, on your life!

Mrs. Stric. Give me resolution, Heaven, to bear  
his usage, and keep it secret from the world. [Aside.]

Mr. Stric. I will have no signs, no items. No hems  
to tell him I am here. Ha! another tap. The gen-  
tleman is in haste, I find. [Opens the door, and enter  
Tetter.] Tetter! Why did you not come in, rascal?

[Beats him.] All vexations meet to cross me.

Tett. Lard, Sir! What do you strike me for? My  
mistress order'd me never to come in where she was,  
without first knocking at the door.

Mr. Stric. Oh, cunning devil! Tetter is too ho-  
nest to be trusted.

Mr. Stric. Unhappy man! Will nothing unde-  
ceive him?

Tett. Sir, here is a letter.

Mr. Stric. To my wife?

Tett. No, Sir, to you. The servant waits below.

Ma. Stric. Art sure it is a servant?

Tett. Sir! [Staring.] it is Mr. Buckle, Sir.

Mr. Stric. I am mad: I know not what to say,  
or do, or think. But let's read. [Reads to himself.]

Sir, We cannot bear to reflect that Mrs. Strickland  
may possibly be ruin'd in your esteem, and in the voice  
of the world, only by the confusion which our affairs  
have made in your family, without offering all within  
our power to clear the misunderstanding between you.  
If you will give yourself the trouble but to step to Mr.  
Meggot's, where all the parties will be, we doubt not  
but we can entirely satisfy your most flagrant suspicions,  
to the honour of Mrs. Strickland, and the quiet of your  
lives.

Jacintha, John Bellamy.

Hey! here is the whole gang witnessing for one  
another. They think I am an ass, and will be led  
by the nose to believe every thing. Call me a chair.  
[Exit Tetter.] Yes, I will go to this rendezvous of  
enemies—I will—and find out all her plots, her ar-  
tifices and contrivances; it will clear my conduct to  
her brother, and all her friends.

[Exit Mr. Strickland.]

Mrs. Stric. Gone, so abruptly! What can that  
letter be about? No matter, There is no way left  
to make us easy but by my disgrace, and I must learn  
to suffer. Time and innocence will teach me to  
bear it patiently.

Enter Lucetta.

Lucet. Mrs. Bellamy, Madam, (for my young La-  
dy is married) begs you would follow Mr. Strickland  
to Mr. Meggot's; she makes no doubt but she shall  
be able to make you and my master easy.

Mrs. Stric. But how came she to know any thing  
of the matter?

Lucet. I have been with them, Madam; I could  
not bear to see so good a lady so ill treated.

Mrs. Stric. I am indeed, Lucetta, ill treated: But  
I hope this day will be the last of it.

Lucet. Madam, Clarinda and Mr. Frankly will be  
there: and the young gentleman, Madam, who was  
with you in the room last night.

Mrs. Stric. Ha! if he is there, there may be  
hopes; and it is worth the trying.

Lucet. Dear lady—Let me call a chair.

Mrs. Stric. I go with you. I cannot be more  
wretched than I am. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. A Room in Meggot's House.

Enter Frankly, Ranger, Bellamy, Jacintha, and  
Meggot.

Frank. Oh, Ranger! this is news indeed. Your  
cousin, and a lady of fortune!

Rang. I have done the business for you. I tell  
you she's your own. She loves you.

Frank. Words are too faint to tell the joy I feel.

Rang. I have put that heart of her's into such a  
flutter, that I'll lay a hundred guineas, with the as-  
sistance which this lady has promis'd me, I fix her  
yours directly.

Jacin. Ay, ay, Mr. Frankly, we have a design



upon her which cannot fail. But you must obey orders.

*Frank.* Most willingly. But remember, dear lady, I have more than life at stake.

*Jacin.* Away then into the next room; for she is this instant coming hither.

*Frank.* Hither! You surprise me more and more.

*Jacin.* Here is a message from her, by which she desires leave to wait on me this afternoon.

*Rang.* Only for the chance of seeing you here, I assure ye.

*Frank.* Let me hug thee; though I know not how to believe it.

*Rang.* Psha! Pr'ythee, do not fustle me! It is a busy day, a very busy day.

*J. Meg.* Thou art the most unaccountable creature in life.

*Rang.* But the most lucky one, Jack, if I succeed for Frankly, as I have for Bellamy, and my heart whispers me I shall. Come in, most noble Mr. Buckle: And what have you to propose?

*Enter Buckle.*

*Buckle.* A lady, Madam, in a chair, says her name is Clarinda.

*Jacin.* Desire her to walk up.

*Bella.* How could you let her wait? [*Exit Buckle.* You must excuse him, Madam. Buckle is a true bachelor's servant, and knows no manners.

*Jacin.* Away, away, Mr. Frankly, and stay till I call you. A rap with my fan shall be the signal. [*Exit Frankly.*] We make very free with your house, Mr. Meggot.

*J. Meg.* Oh! You could not oblige me more!

*Enter Clarinda.*

*Clar.* Dear Mrs. Bellamy, pity my confusion. I am to wish you joy, and ask your pardon, all in a breath. I know not what to say. I am quite ashamed of my last night's behaviour.

*Jacin.* Come, come, Clarinda, it is all well. All is over and forgot. Mr. Bellamy—[*Salute.*

*Clar.* I wish you joy, Sir, with all my heart, and should have been sorry if any folly of mine had prevented it.

*Bella.* Madam, I am oblig'd to you.

*Clar.* [*Aside.*] I see nothing of Mr. Frankly! My heart misgives me.

*Rang.* And so, you came hither purely out of friendship, good-nature, and humility.

*Clar.* Purely.

*Rang.* To confess your offences, to beg pardon, and to make reparation.

*Clar.* Purely. Is this any thing so extraordinary?

*J. Meg.* The most so of any thing in life, I think.

*Rang.* A very whimsical business for so fine a lady; and an errand you seldom went on before, I fancy, my dear cousin.

*Jacin.* Never, I dare swear, if I may judge by the awkward concern she shews in delivering it.

*Clar.* Concern? Lard! well, I protest, you are all exceeding pretty company! Being settled for life, Jacintha, gives an ease to the mind, that brightens conversation strangely.

*Jacin.* I am sorry, with all my heart, you are not in the same condition; for as you are, my dear, you are horribly chagrined.

*Rang.* But with a little of our help, Madam, the lady may recover, and be very good company.

*Clar.* Hum! What does he mean, Mr. Bellamy?

*Bella.* Ask him, Madam.

*Clar.* Indeed I shall not give myself the trouble.

*Jacin.* Then you know what he means.

*Clar.* Something impertinent, I suppose, not worth explaining.

*Jacin.* It is something you won't let him explain, I find.

*Enter a Servant, and whispers Meggot.*

*J. Meg.* Very well! Desire him to walk into the parlour. Madam, the gentleman is below.

*Jacin.* Then every one to your post. You know your cues.

*Rang.* I warrant ye.

[*Exeunt Gentlemen.*

*Clar.* All gone! I am glad of it, for I want to speak to you.

*Jacin.* And I, my dear Clarinda, have something which I do not know how to tell you. But it must be known, sooner or later.

*Clar.* What's the matter?

*Jacin.* Poor Mr. Frankly—

*Clar.* You fright me out of my senses!

*Jacin.* Has no wounds but what you can cure. Ha, ha, ha!

*Clar.* Psha! I am angry.

*Jacin.* Psha! You are pleas'd—and will be more so, when I tell you, this man, whom fortune has thrown in your way, is in rank and temper the man in the world who suits you best for a husband.

*Clar.* Husband! I say, husband, indeed! [*Where will this end!* [*Aside.*

*Jacin.* His very soul is yours, and he only waits an opportunity of telling you so. He is in the next room. Shall I call him in?

*Clar.* My dear girl, hold!

*Jacin.* How foolish is this coyness now, Clarinda! If the men were here, indeed, something might be said—And so, Mr. Frankly!

*Clar.* How can you be so teasing?

*Jacin.* Nay, I am in downright earnest: and, to shew you how particular I have been in my enquiries, though I know you have a spirit above regarding the foolish, paltry way, of a Smithfield bargain—his fortune—

*Clar.* I don't care what his fortune is.

*Jacin.* Don't you so? Then you are farther gone than I thought you were.

*Clar.* No, psha! pr'ythee! I don't mean so, neither.

*Jacin.* I don't care what you mean: But you won't like him the worse, I hope, for having a fortune superior to your own. Now shall I call him in?

*Clar.* Psha, dear girl—Some other time.

*Jacin.* [*Raps with her fan.*] That's the signal, and here he is. You shall not stir: I positively will leave you together. [*Exit Jacintha.*

*Clar.* I tremble all over.

*Enter Frankly.*

*Frank.* Pardon this freedom, Madam—But I hope our having so luckily met with a common friend in Mrs. Bellamy—

*Clar.* Sir!

*Frank.* Makes any farther apology for my behaviour last night absolutely unnecessary.

*Clar.* So far, Mr. Frankly, that I think the apology should be rather on my side, for the impertinent bustle I made about her.

*Frank.* This behaviour gives me hopes, Madam: Pardon the construction—But from the little bustle you made about the lady, may I not hope, you was not quite indifferent about the gentleman?

*Clar.* Have a care of being too sanguine in your hopes: might not a love of power, or the satisfaction of shewing that power, or the dear pleasure of abusing that power; might not these have been foundation enough for more than what I did?

*Frank.* Charming woman—With most of your sex, I grant, they might, but not with you. Whatever power your beauty gives, your good-nature will allow you no other use of it than to oblige.



Clar. This is the height of compliment, Mr. Frankly.

Fran. Not in my opinion, I assure you, Madam; and I am now going to put it to the trial.

Clar. [Aside.] What is he going to say now?

Fran. [Aside.] What is it that ails me, that I cannot speak? Psha! he here!

Enter Ranger.

Clar. Interrupted! Impertinent!

Rang. There is no fight so ridiculous as a pair of your true lovers. Here are you two now bowing and kissing, and keeping a passion secret from one another, that is no secret to all the house beside. And, if you don't make the matter up immediately, it will be all over the town within these two hours.

Clar. What do you mean?

Fran. Ranger—

Rang. Do you be quiet, can't ye? [Aside.] But it is over, I suppose, cousin, and you have given him your consent.

Clar. Sir, the liberties you are pleas'd to take with

Rang. Oh! in your airs still, are you? Why then, Mr. Frankly, there is a certain letter of yours, Sir, to this lady.

Clar. A letter to me!

Rang. Ay! to you, Madam.

Fran. Ha! what of that letter?

Rang. It is only fallen into Mr. Strickland's hands, that is all; and he has read it.

Fran. Read it.

Rang. Ay! read it to all his family at home, and to all the company below: and, if some step be not put to it, it will be read in all the coffee-houses in town.

Fran. A stop! This sword shall put a stop to it, or I will perish in the attempt.

Rang. But will that sword put a stop to the talk of the town?—Only make it talk the faster, take my word for it.

Clar. This is all a trick.

Rang. Is it so? You shall soon see that, my fine cousin. [Exit Ranger.]

Fran. It is but too true, I fear. There is such a letter which I gave Lucetta. Can you forgive me? Was I much to blame, when I could neither see, nor hear of you?

Clar. [Tenderly.] You give yourself, Mr. Frankly, a thousand more uneasinesses than you need about me.

Fran. If this uneasiness but convinces you how much I love you—Interrupted again!

Clar. [Aside.] This is downright malice.

Enter Ranger, followed by Jacintha, Mr. Strickland, Bellamy, and Meggot.

Rang. Enter, enter, gentleman and lady.

Clar. Mr. Strickland here! what is all this?

Rang. Now you shall see whether this is a trick or no.

Jacin. Do not be uneasy, my dear, we will explain it to you.

Fran. I cannot bear this trifling, Ranger, when my heart is on the rack.

Rang. Come this way then, and learn.

[Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly, and Ranger, retire.]

[Mr. Strickland, Bellamy, and Meggot, advance.]

Mr. Stric. Why I know not well what to say. This has a face. This letter may as well agree with Clarinda as with my wife, as you have told the story; and Lucetta explained it to—-but she, for a sixpenny-piece, would have construed it the other way.

J. Meg. But, Sir, if we produce this Mr. Frankly

to you, and he owns himself the author of this letter—

Bella. And if Clarinda likewise be brought before your face to encourage his addresses, there can be no farther room for doubt.

Mr. Stric. No—Let that appear, and I shall—I think I shall be satisfied—-But yet it cannot be—

Bella. Why not? Hear me, Sir. [They talk.]

[Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly, and Ranger, advance.]

Jacin. In short, Clarinda, unless the affair is made up directly, a separation, with all the obloquy on her side, must be the consequence.

Clar. Poor Mrs. Strickland! I pity her; but for him, he deserves all he feels, were it ten times what it is.

Jacin. It is for her sake only, that we beg of you both to bear his impertinence.

Clar. With all my heart. You will do what you please with me.

Fran. Generous creature!

Mr. Stric. Ha! here she is, and with her the very man I saw deliver the letter to Lucetta—I do begin to fear I have made myself a fool—Now for the proof—Here is a letter, Sir, which has given me great disturbance, and these gentlemen assure me it was writ by you.

Fran. That letter, Sir, upon my honour, I left this morning with Lucetta, for this lady.

Mr. Stric. For that lady! and Frankly, the name at the bottom, is not feign'd, but your real name?

Fran. Frankly is my name.

Mr. Stric. I see, I feel myself ridiculous.

Jacin. Now, Mr. Strickland—I hope—

J. Meg. Ay! ay! a clear case.

Mr. Stric. I am satisfied, and will go this instant to Mrs. Strickland.

Rang. Why then, the devil fetch me if this would satisfy me.

Mr. Stric. What's that?

Rang. Nay, nothing: it is no affair of mine.

Bella. What do you mean, Ranger?

Mr. Stric. Ay, what do you mean? I will know before I stir.

Rang. With all my heart, Sir. Cannot you see that all this may be a concerted matter between them?

Fran. Ranger, you know I can resent.

Mr. Stric. Go on—I will defend you, let who will resent it.

Rang. Why then, Sir, I declare myself your friend: and, were I as you—nothing but their immediate marriage should convince me.

Mr. Stric. Sir, you're right, and are my friend indeed. Give me your hand.

Rang. Nay, were I to hear her say, I, Clarinda, take thee, Charles, I would not believe them till I saw them a-bed together. Now resent it as you will.

Mr. Stric. Ay, Sir, as you will. But nothing less shall convince me; and so, my fine lady, if you are in earnest—

Clar. Sure, Mr. Strickland—

Mr. Stric. Nay, no flouncing! You cannot escape.

Rang. Why, Frankly, has't no soul?

Fran. I pity her confusion.

Rang. Pity her confusion!—the man's a fool—Here, take her hand.

Fran. Thus on my knees then, let me ravish, with your hand, your heart.

Clar. Ravish it you cannot; for it is with all my heart I give it you.

Mr. Stric. I am satisfied.

Clar. And so am I, now it once is over.

Rang. And so am I, my dainty cousin—And I



with you joy of a man your whole sex would go to cuffs for, if they knew him but half so well as I do—  
Ha! she here! This is more than I bargain'd for.

[*Aside.*]

Jacintha leads in Mrs. Strickland.

Mr. Stric. [*Embracing Mrs. Strickland.*] Madam, reproach me not with my folly, and you shall never hear of it again.

Mrs. Stric. Reproach you? No! If ever you hear the least reflection pass my lips, forsake me in that instant: or, what would yet be worse, suspect again.

Mr. Stric. It is enough. I am ashamed to talk to thee. This letter which I wrote to your brother, thus I tear in pieces, and with it part for ever with my jealousy.

Mrs. Stric. This is a joy, indeed! as great as unexpected. Yet there is one thing wanting to make it lasting.

Rang. What the devil is coming now? [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Stric. Be assur'd, every other suspicion of me was as unjust as your last; though perhaps you had more foundation for your fears.

Rang. She won't tell, sure, for her own sake.

[*Aside.*]

Mrs. Stric. All must be clear'd before my heart will be at ease.

Rang. It looks plaguy like it, though! [*Aside.*]

Mr. Stric. What mean you? I am all attention.

Mrs. Stric. There was a man, as you suspected, in my chamber last night.

Mr. Stric. Ha! take care, I shall relapse.

Mrs. Stric. That gentleman was he——

Rang. Here is a devil for you! [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Stric. Let him explain the rest.

Rang. A frolic! a mere frolic! on my life.

Mr. Stric. A frolic! Zounds! [*They interpose.*]

Rang. Nay, don't let us quarrel the very moment you declar'd yourself my friend. There was no harm done, I promise you. Nay, never frown. After I have told my story, any satisfaction you are pleas'd to ask, I shall be ready to give.

Mr. Stric. Be quick then, and ease me of my pain.

Rang. Why then, as I was strolling about last night—upon the look out, I must confess—chance, and chance only, convey'd me to your house, where I espied a ladder of ropes most invitingly fasten'd to the window——

Jacin. Which ladder I had fasten'd for my escape.

Mr. Stric. Proceed.

Rang. Up mounted I; and up I should have gone, if it had been in the garret. I open'd one door, then another, and, to my great surprise, the whole house was silent. At last, I stole into a room where this lady was undressing.

Mr. Stric. 'Sdeath and the devil! you did not dare, sure——

Rang. I don't know whether I had dared, or if I had not heard the maid say something of the master's being jealous. Oh!—damn me, though then the work is half done to my hands.

Jacin. Do you mind that, Mr. Strickland?

Mr. Stric. I do—I do, most feelingly.

Rang. The maid grew saucy, and, most conveniently to my wishes, was turn'd out of the room and if you had not the best wife in the world——

Mr. Stric. Ounds, Sir! but what right had you——

Rang. What right, Sir?—If you will be jealous of your wife without a cause; if you will be out that time of night, when you might have been much better employ'd at home; we young fellows think we have a right——

Mr. Stric. No joking, I beseech you. You know not what I feel.

Rang. Then, seriously, I was mad or drunk enough to call it which you will, to be very rude to this lady for which I ask both her pardon and yours. I am an odd sort of a fellow, perhaps: but I am about telling you, or any man, a lie, damn me if I am not.

Mr. Stric. I must, I cannot but believe you; as for the future, Madam, you shall find a heart ready to love and trust you. No tears, I beg: I cannot bear them.

Mrs. Stric. I cannot speak, and yet there is a favour, Sir——

Mr. Stric. I understand you—And, as a proof of the sincerity with which I speak, I beg it as a favour of this lady in particular, [*To Clarinda.*] and of the company in general, to return to my house immediately; where every thing, Mr. Bellamy, shall be settled to your entire satisfaction.—No thanks, I have not deserv'd them.

J. Meg. I beg your pardon, Sir; the fiddles are ready; Mrs. Bellamy has promis'd me her hand and I won't part with one of you till midnight and if you are as well satisfied as you pretend to be let our friend Rattle, here, begin the ball with Mrs. Strickland; for he seems to be the hero of the day.

Mr. Stric. As you and the company please.

Rang. Why, this is honest. Continue but in this humour, and faith! Sir, you may trust me to run about your house like a spaniel—I cannot sufficiently admire at the whimsicalness of my good fortune in being so instrumental to this general happiness—Bellamy, Frankly, I wish you joy with all my heart (though I had rather you should be married than I for all that.) Never did matrimony appear to me with a smile upon her face till this instant.

Sure joys for ever wait each happy pair,

When sense the man, and virtue crowns the fair,  
And kind compliance proves their mutual care.

[*A Dance.*]





in  
uz  
at  
le  
rt  
l.  
ma  
ai  
e.  
me